

STUDIES
IN THE
BOOK OF ACTS

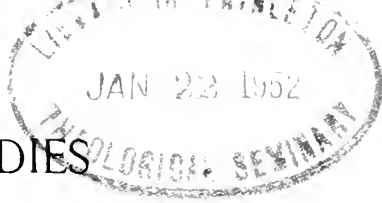
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BOOK OF ACTS.

BY

ROBERT E. SPEER.

Eighth Thousand.

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Suggestions.

1. The importance of a thorough study of the Book of Acts can be understood by those only who have undertaken such a study. All others are losers by neglect. When they have begun such a study, they will be surprised that they have delayed so long.

2. These outlines are designed to help the student in his work. The end of his work should be a complete mastery of the Book. These studies will indicate the directions of his work. They can not do his work for him.

3. If the class has time for ten lessons, study II., VII., X., XII., XIII., XVII., XVIII., 2, XX., XXI. If there is time for twenty lessons, study, in addition to the preceding, III., IV., V., VI., XVIII., 3, 4, 5, XIX. For thirty lessons, take also I., VIII., XI., XV., XVI., XVIII., 6, 7, 8,

9. For forty lessons, include XIV., XVIII.,
1. The full course will furnish material for at least fifty lessons. The lives of Peter and Paul can be readily separated from the rest of the course and studied by themselves.

4. Become thoroughly familiar with the Book. Read it through frequently. Instead of taking XVII. as a single lesson, distribute it, mastering one or two chapters each time. Begin this at the outset, and review constantly.

5. Look up each reference and study it, bearing in mind the special thought of which the text was cited as illustration. Frequently the proofs are partial. In such cases add others from your own study.

6. Confine the study of each hour to the special subject assigned for the lesson. Defer other questions, especially unimportant side issues, until the end of the lesson, or until some special time, when all that have accumulated can be taken up together.

7. The class should have within reach a good commentary,— Gloag, Hackett, or

Lumby, in the *Cambridge Bible Series*. The careful Greek scholar will find the former two and Lechler's *Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times* helpful. The English student will prefer Lumby. McClintock and Strong's *Encyclopedia of the Bible*, which should be in every good library, will furnish nearly all needed information. This course, however, must be in the Book of Acts. Other books must not take its place.

8. Begin, continue, and end all your study in prayer. Be willing to change your life, and to live as the study of the Book may give you light. Study to become better acquainted with Christ, rather than to satisfy curiosity or to acquire knowledge.

STUDIES IN THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

I. AUTHORSHIP AND AUTHENTICITY.

Not until the time of Photius in the ninth century was any mention made of any other writer than Luke. Photius said, "Some believe the writer to be Clement of Rome, some Barnabas, and others Luke the Evangelist," an assertion unsupported by the Christian Fathers. Photius himself agreed in the common opinion that Luke wrote it.

I. *The testimony of tradition.*

a. Heresy.

The Marcionites, Manicheans, Severians, and Ebionites rejected the authority of the Acts because it contradicted their peculiar views. They admitted, without question, the source from which their opponents claimed to receive it. Under such circumstances, their rejection of the book becomes a testimony to its genuineness. (See Bible dictionary for definition of these sects.)

Basilides, one of the earliest known gnostics, who lived at Alexandria about

120, assumed for himself and his son Isidore the title of pupils of the Apostle Matthias. The Apostolate of Matthias is mentioned only in the Acts. The circulation of that book is therefore implied.

b. The Fathers.

Polycarp, 80 to 155, evidently quotes Acts ii. 24, in his words "whom God hath awakened, having loosed the (birth) pains of Hades."

Clement of Rome, 30 to 100. His first Epistle to the Corinthians is the earliest undisputed document of the Apostolic age. In chapter xviii., he combines I. Samuel xiii. 14 with Psalm lxxxix. 20, in the words, "I have found a man after my own heart, David, son of Jesse, and I have anointed him with eternal oil." Just as in Acts xiii. 22. In chapter ii. are the words, "Giving more willingly than receiving." Compare Acts xx. 35. Doubtless these are allusions rather than quotations; but it was not the custom of the Fathers to cite the name of the writer, or to quote fully or literally. The quotations were well known.

Ignatius. In his Epistles to the Smyrnaeans, chapter iii., are the words, "He ate and drank with them." Compare Acts x. 41.

In Acta Martyri Ignatii, written 115 at the latest, chapter v., are the words, "That

when Puteoli was pointed out to him he hastened to go forth, wishing to follow the traces of the Apostle Paul." Compare Acts xxviii. 13.

Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons in 178. He had been intimate with those who saw the Apostles, and says distinctly that Luke was the author of the Acts. Quotes often, and in one place gives a distinct summary of the last twelve chapters.

Clement of Alexandria, 190. He not only speaks of Luke as having composed the Acts, but wrote a commentary on it.

Tertullian, 200. He quotes Acts repeatedly, and names Luke as the author in such a way as to make it evident that he merely followed in this the universal opinion of the age.

Eusebius, 325, Bishop of Cæsarea, the friend of Constantine and the father of church history. He places the Acts among the uncontested books, and quotes it throughout his notices of the apostolic age as sacred Scripture, and says: "Luke, a native of Antioch, by profession a physician, was mostly Paul's companion, though he associated not a little with the other Apostles. He has left us examples of the art of healing souls, which he acquired from the Apostles, in two divinely inspired books,—first, in the Gospel which he testifies to have written according to what eye witnesses and ministers of the word

delivered to him from the beginning, all of which, also, he says that he investigated from the first; and secondly, in the Acts of the Apostles, which he composed, not from report as in the other case, but according to his own personal observation."

Chrysostom, 347 to 407. There is an unbroken line of testimony to him, though he says that the book was neglected in his day at Constantinople, which helps to explain the remark of Photius.

Constantine believed that Luke wrote it, and defended this position by a reference to the first words of the Acts, and to its subject matter as a continuance and completion of the Gospel.

c. The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs.

This was the production of some Jewish Christian, desirous of bringing his fellow countrymen to Christ. He represents Jacob's twelve sons as speaking on their death beds, and assigns to each a prophetic discourse, depicting the future lot of their people, and the blessings to be conferred by the Gospel. It dates at the beginning of the second or at the end of the first century, for it alludes to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in 70, but not to the second destruction by Adrian in 135. It contains many quotations from the Evangelists, and says: "In the last

days, said Benjamin to his sons, there shall spring from my race a ruler, according to the Lord, who, after having heard His voice, shall spread new light among the heathen, and shall abide in the synagogues of the heathen to the end of the ages, and shall be in the mouth of their chiefs as a pleasant song. His work and his word shall be written in the holy books." Paul was of the tribe of Benjamin. Apparently, the Acts was already reckoned among the holy books.

d. Other testimony.

Epistle of the churches of Lyons and Vienne. Speaking of the martyrs in the persecution under Marcus Aurelius, 161 to 180, it says: "They prayed for those who inflicted terrible tortures, as did Stephen, the perfect martyr, 'Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.' So he prayed for those who stoned him." The word martyr in this special sense is first used by Paul in a speech in the Acts. The Bishop of Lyons in 167 was Pothinus, formerly a disciple of Polycarp. The Epistle was sent from Gaul to Rome. It is, therefore, a witness to the familiar knowledge of the Acts in Asia Minor, Gaul, and Italy.

Muratorian Canon, 170. Contains a list of Books read in the churches in the time of Pius I., Bishop of Rome in the second

century. It says: "The Acts of all the Apostles were written in a single book addressed by Luke to the most excellent Theophilus. It comprises an account of events which occurred within his own personal knowledge, as is shown plainly by the omission of all notice of the martyrdom of Peter and of Paul's departure from Rome to Spain."

2. *The same writer wrote Acts and the third Gospel.*

a. The prologues.

The two Books are dedicated to the same man. The writer of Acts introduces his work as a second part or continuation of a previous history. What Jesus began to do and teach in the Gospel He went on to do and teach in the Acts.

b. The unity of system in the two Books.

Notice their fullness in peculiar or specially original parts where Luke has special means of knowing. *First*, notice Luke i., ii., ix. 51 — xix. 28. The incidents which the other evangelists do not contain are given with "singular vividness of coloring and minuteness of detail." Do you notice a law of parsimony as shown in the avoidance of repetitions? Luke omits Mark v. 6, a visit to Nazareth during the Lord's later ministry in Galilee. He gives an earlier one, Luke iv. 16-30. Note also

the omission of the story of the healing of the dumb man, Mark vii. 31-37. A similar transaction is spoken of in Luke xi. 14. Luke omits the miracle of the barren fig tree (Mark xi. 12-21), but he relates the parable (Luke xii. 6-9). He omits the story of the anointing of the Lord at Bethany, but includes the story of the other anointing. Luke vii. 36-50. He omits the second feeding of the multitude. Get the details of the two feedings clearly in mind.

Secondly, this same trait is apparent in the Book of Acts. The writer omits the experiences related in II. Cor. xi. 23-30; yet he records Paul's speech and the partial allusion to these trials in Acts xx. 19. So, also, he omits any record of the work done in Macedonia shortly before Paul wrote the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, in which its extent is noted. It is barely indicated by a few pregnant words. Acts xx. 2.

c. Unity of style.

(1.) Verbs compounded with *συν*. Such verbs are found in Matthew three times, Mark five, John three, Luke twenty-four, Acts fifty-one.

ἅπας occurs frequently in Acts and Luke; in all others nine times.

πορεύεσθαι occurs in Luke forty-nine times, in Acts, thirty-eight; rarely elsewhere.

Ιερουσαλήμ in preference to *Ιερουσόλυμα* as the name of Jerusalem occurs in both.

Credner gives sixty-five idioms peculiar to Acts and the third Gospel. Of these he says, "These very numerous peculiarities attest with certainty the genuineness of the whole work, Gospel and Acts, in its present form."

This unity of style is observable also in the use of the characteristic Pauline word *χάρις*, which does not occur at all in Matthew and Mark, and only three times in John. John i. 14, 16, 17. It occurs in Luke eight times, and in Acts eighteen times.

The verb *χαρίζομαι* occurs in Luke twice, Acts three times, often in Paul, but nowhere else in the New Testament.

(II.) The classical style.

(III.) Tenderness of sympathy in both feeling for the poor and suffering, praise of almsgiving, and declaration of the freedom of the Gospel. Find proofs of this.

(IV.) Credner: "The Acts of the Apostles describes itself as a continuation of the third Gospel; and the common ob-

ject of both writings, the common peculiarities of language and style, the common building up of doctrine on Pauline principles and foundation, the common striving after exactness . . . prove irrefragably that the author of the third Gospel, the physician Luke, must on no account be separated from the Author of the Acts of the Apostles."

Renan: "One thing beyond all doubt is that the Acts have the same author as the third Gospel, and are a continuation of that Gospel. The prefaces that are written at the beginning of both, the dedication of each to Theophilus, the perfect resemblance in style and in ideas, furnish in this regard abundant proofs."

d. Unity of doctrine.

Both are Pauline.

Gospel.

(I.) Tradition.

Irenæus says, "Luke, the follower of Paul, set down in a book the Gospel which he (Paul) used to preach."

(II.) Traces.

Compare —

Luke iv. 22 : Col. iv. 6.

Luke vi. 36 : II. Cor. i. 3.

Luke vi. 39 : Rom. ii. 19.

Luke xxii. 19, 20 : I. Cor. xi. 23-29.

(III.) The connection between the Passion and the Resurrection.

Luke xxiv. 7, 26, 46: I. Cor. xv. 3, 4.
I. Thess. iv. 14: Phil. iii. 10.

(iv.) Attention to sinners in each.

(v.) Universality and gratuitousness of the Gospel.

Luke iii. 6; iv. 16-30; Col. i. 23;
II. Cor. v. 19.

Acts.

All are agreed upon the Pauline character of the Acts. This has even been made the basis of an impeachment of its truth.

3. *If the third Gospel and the Book of Acts were written by the same man, do we know who it could have been, apart from the testimony of tradition?*

a. The writer was an immediate disciple of the Apostles. Luke i. 2. Renan calls him a Christian of the second Apostolic generation. He was not personally present at, or acquainted with, the early church, for he omits much that would be of interest, and gives only the main necessary outlines.

b. He was a Gentile Christian. A Jewish Christian would probably not have spoken of the elders "of the Jews" (Luke vii. 3), or of a city "of the Jews" (Luke xxiii. 51). Other touches which indicate his Gentile character are Luke i. 26; iv. 31; viii. 26; Acts i. 19.

c. He was a believer belonging to the school of Paul.

(I.) Universality.

Luke iii. 4-6; Rom. iii. 29; Gal. iii. 14.

(II.) Account of the Lord's Supper.

Luke xxii. 17-20; I. Cor. xi. 23-29.

d. He was one of Paul's fellow laborers, for he must be speaking of himself when the first person plural occurs in the Acts xvi. 10, 11. He cannot be one of Paul's fellow laborers mentioned in the Acts, for he always speaks of himself anonymously.

e. He must have been a man of culture.

(I.) The prologue of the Gospel and the dedication of it and the Acts to Theophilus indicate it. This was a Greek custom, although Josephus does dedicate one of his writings to Epaphroditus.

(II.) The classic style.

(III.) The historical taste and delicacy of mind.

f. These features do not belong to —

(I.) Barnabas, for he was a Levite.

(II.) Silas, for he belonged to the primitive church at Jerusalem.

(III.) Timothy, for he was a young Lycaonian, possibly without culture. See II. Tim. i. 6-8; I. Cor. xvi. 10, 11.

(IV.) Moreover, Silas, Timothy, and Barnabas were all with Paul before the "we"

begins; they were not with him when the "we" is used; they were with him when the writer says "they."

(v.) Titus, for like reasons. He was not at Troas when the writer uses "we." II. Cor. ii. 12, 13.

g. They do apply to Luke.

(i.) Paul ranks him among the Christians of Greek origin. Col. iv. 14.

(ii.) He assigns him a distinguished place among his disciples and fellow workers. II. Cor. viii. 18, 19.

(iii.) The title of physician implies scientific and literary culture probably above that of the other disciples and helpers.

So Renan declares: "I persist in believing that the last redactor of the Acts is truly the disciple of Paul, who says 'we' in the last chapters. And we think that the author of the third Gospel and the Acts is assuredly Luke, disciple of Paul."

II. WHO WAS LUKE?

Named only three times in the Bible, never by himself. Col. iv. 14; Philemon 24; II. Tim. iv. 11.

1. *From Col. iv. 11, 14, we may infer that he was a Gentile.*

Paul does not include him among those of the circumcision. Eusebius and Jerome say he was a Syrian of Antioch, explaining the intimate knowledge he shows about the condition and teachers of that church. Acts vi. 5 speaks of Nicholas of Antioch, without mentioning the place of any of the six other deacons. Mr. Smith, of Jordanhill, mentions that, of the eight accounts of the Russian Campaign, only the two Scotch authors, Scott and Alison, state that General Barclay de Tolly was of Scotch extraction. Some of Luke's special information about the Herods (Luke viii. 3; xxiii. 8, 11, 12, 15; Acts. xii. 1, 6, 11, 19-21) may have been derived from Manaen, the foster brother of Antipas of Antioch. Acts xiii. 1.

2. *He may have been a proselyte of the gate, a Gentile who joined in Jewish worship and recognized the Jewish law, but was not circumcised.*

a. Luke says "day and night" (Acts ix. 24), whereas, when he is reporting the speeches of Paul (Acts xx. 31; xxvi. 7),—like Paul himself in I. Thess. iii. 10, II. Thess. iii. 8, I. Tim. v. 5,—he always says "night and day," in accord-

ance with the Jewish notion that the night preceded the day.

b. Notice Acts i. 19.

c. His acquaintance with Jewish opinions and customs. Acts iii. 1; v. 6.

d. His knowledge of the Septuagint.

3. *The date of his conversion is uncertain.*

He was not one of the Seventy, as Epiphanius suggests.

Nor one of the two in Luke xxiv. 13, as Theophilus thinks.

Nor one of the Greeks in John xii. 20.

For he says (Luke i. 1) he was not an eye-witness. And this is confirmed by the fact that his references to Christ are those of the post-apostolic generation; *e. g.* the use of ὁ Κύριος when speaking of Christ. Κύριος, as a substitute for "Jesus," occurs fourteen times in Luke; elsewhere in the Synoptists only in Mark xvi. 19, 20. The combination "the Lord Jesus" occurs only in Luke xxiv. 3, though often in the Epistles.

Perhaps he was converted by Paul. Tertullian seems to assume so: "A disciple . . . of Paul, without a doubt." At any rate, he was converted before he met Paul at Troas. Acts xvi. 11.

4. From Troas he accompanied Paul to Philippi, where he remained during the second and third missionary journeys of Paul — a period of seven

years, 51-58. We know he was left there, for "they" supplants "we" in Acts xvi. 40 (compare Acts xvi. 16), when Paul and Silas leave Philippi.

5. *Doubtless Luke was not idle all this time.*

We infer from II. Cor. viii. 18, referring not to the written but to the spoken Gospel, that he had been preaching. At any rate, a physician of Luke's tender spirit would have found means of subsistence and opportunities for helpfulness everywhere. Yet Luke never mentions these seven years of glorious missionary service.

6. When Paul came to Philippi at the end of his third missionary journey, or when he was near Philippi,—where did he spend the three months of Acts xx. 3?—Luke joined him (Acts xx. 5) to accompany him to Jerusalem (Acts xxi. 15-18).

7. *After this Luke was Paul's constant companion.*

a. Was with him in his imprisonment at Cæsarea. Acts xxiii. 33; xxiv. 23. Did they do any literary work there?

b. Sailed with him to Rome. Acts xxvii. 1. Aristarchus went along. Acts xxvii. 2.

c. Was by his side during his first imprisonment. Acts xxviii. 16; Col. iv. 14; Phil. 24. "My fellow laborers." Many with Paul now.

d. Luke was clearly with Paul at Rome in 62, when the Epistles to the Colossians and

Philemon were written. Where was he when Paul wrote to the Philippians? He was not at Rome, or Paul would certainly have sent greetings to the Philippians from him. He was not at Philippi, or Paul would have sent greetings to him. He was probably in Achaia, where he labored with Paul, and where, according to the tradition of Jerome, he wrote the Gospel.

e. Was with him during his second imprisonment. II. Tim. iv. 11. "Only Luke." Solitary now; but Luke was faithful even unto death.

8. *Luke was a physician.*

"The beloved physician." Col. iv. 14. What does this imply as to culture and education? Tholuck says, "'Collegium archiatrorum' had to examine in every city those who desired to practice the healing art, and to exercise supervision over them."

a. Traces of Luke's medical knowledge in the Acts: iii. 7; ix. 18; x. 10; xii. 23; xiii. 11; xx. 31; xxviii. 8.

b. Traces in the Gospel: iv. 23, 38; v. 12; vii. 2; vi. 19; viii. 46; viii. 43-48 (compare the unceremonious statement of Mark v. 25-26); ix. 2; xiii. 11.

9. *Had he been a physician to some vessel on the Mediterranean Sea?*

The size of the ancients' ships, holding upwards of three hundred people, the imperfect

sanitary arrangements, and the length of the voyages, must have rendered a physician necessary. Luke possessed accurate nautical knowledge, shown especially in Acts xxvii. In this chapter are five compounds of *πλέω*,— Luke uses three others elsewhere (Acts xx. 6, 16; Luke viii. 26),—and ten other correct nautical terms.

At any rate, he was a physician and used to the sea, and must have been a great comfort and help to Paul. And his large sympathy is stamped on his Gospel. “He was a physician, and so to all his words are medicines of the drooping soul.” — Jerome.

10. *Could he have been the cousin of the Latin poet, Lucan, nephew of Gallio and Seneca?*

Acts xviii. 14–17. Renan and Plumptre, on the ground of an apochryphal correspondence between Paul and Seneca, have indulged in this speculation.

11. *There is a legend that he was a painter.*

There was a Florentine painter of the twelfth century named Luca Santo, and there was an earlier Greek hermit of the name of Lucas, who used to paint the Blessed Virgin. The tradition may have originated in the finding of a picture of the Virgin in the Catacombs with the inscription, “One of seven painted by

Luca." Art and poetry have perpetuated the tradition.

"Give honor unto Luke, evangelist,
For he it is (the ancient legends say)
Who first taught Art to fold her hands and pray."

— Rosetti.

12. *Luke's later life.*

We have nothing reliable about it.

Epiphanius says that he preached in Dalmatia, Gallia, Italy, and Macedonia.

Jerome (in what Godet calls an interpolated passage) asserts that he lived a celibate life to the age of eighty-four.

Gregory of Nazianzus first makes him a martyr.

Nicephorus, fifteenth century, maintains that he was hanged on an olive tree in Greece at the age of eighty.

On the ancient doors of the San Paulo in Rome he is represented as dying peacefully.

It was generally believed that he ended his days in Achaia; for there, according to Jerome, the Emperor Constantine sought for his ashes to transport them to the Church of the Apostles in Constantinople.

13. *His relation to Paul is the important thing. It was a warm, close, uninterrupted friendship.*

God has helped His Kingdom more than once in this way. Luther and Melancthon, Calvin and Beza, Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, are other illustrations of the same truth. The Lord sent out the disciples two by two. So,

too, we read of Peter and "Marcus, my son."
I. Peter v. 13.

The significance and influence of this friendship —

a. On Luke.

(I.) Opportunity for service.

(II.) Changed his character.

(III.) The pure privilege and honor of it.

b. On Paul.

(I.) In his sickness.

(II.) In his work. The preacher and the physician went together.

(III.) In his literary work. Luke never mentions Paul's Epistles in the Acts. Did he have a share in them, and is his silence due to modesty?

(IV.) In his language. Notice the medical terms in the following passages in Paul's Epistles: I. Tim. i. 10; vi. 4; iv. 2, 8; v. 23; II. Tim. ii. 17; iv. 3; Phil. iii. 2, 8; Col. iii. 5.

This may be a little precarious, but we need not let go the internal evidence in Luke's writings of his knowledge of medicine. Thus Jerome speaks of "Lucas, medicus Antiochensis, ut scripta ejus indicant."

And Luke was a faithful friend. Col. iv. 14; II. Tim. iv. 10, 11.

c. See Keble's *Christian Year*, "St. Luke's Day."

14. *What is your judgment of his character and work?*

“ Whose joy is to the wandering sheep
To tell of the Great Shepherd’s love;
To learn of mourners while they weep
The music that makes mirth above;
Who makes the Saviour all his theme,
The Gospel all his pride and praise.”

“ Utilis ille labor per quem vivere tot aegri,
Utilior per quem tot didicere mori.”

III. WHEN WAS THE BOOK OF ACTS WRITTEN?

1. Before the destruction of Jerusalem. Because the Gospel of Luke contains explicit prophecies of the destruction of Jerusalem, and because Acts was written, according to its own statement, after the Gospel, the rationalistic critics hold it must have been written after 70.

a. Jesus was, however, able to foretell things to come, and the evangelists were preserved from error in recording these predictions.

b. In the numerous notices of Jerusalem, which show personal knowledge and deep interest in its localities, no indication is given that any change has passed over the places where Paul had endured his sorrows and his enemies had temporarily but decisively triumphed. Acts i. 19; iii. 11, "*is* called." A sensitive man like Luke was not likely to have omitted the mention of such things.

c. There was time enough for the writer to complete the records before 70.

2. The time when Acts was written was not far distant from the termination of Paul's imprisonment at Rome, mentioned in Acts xxviii. Luke speaks of that in a way clearly to imply that the imprisonment was over; either Paul had been liberated or he had been put to death.

a. If, following the tradition of his second imprisonment and subsequent death, we suppose he was liberated, we have a natural ex-

planation of the abrupt close of the Book, if we assume that Luke published it at the time of the Apostle's release, or so soon after that the interval furnished nothing new which he deemed it necessary to add to the history.

b. If, on the other hand, we suppose that this, the first and only captivity of Paul, was terminated by his martyrdom, it is difficult to account for the writer's silence respecting his death, except on the ground that it was so recent and well known in the circle of his readers that they did not need the information.

By and by we shall see that this second supposition — that Paul's first captivity in Rome was his only one, ended by his death — is untenable. But, for the present, whichever one we take makes the time of writing the Acts almost coincide with the end of the captivity in Rome, which Luke has described.

3. *What time was this?*

Most critics agree that Paul was brought to Rome in 61 or 62. The Neronian persecution came in 64. If Paul was set at liberty after his imprisonment, it must have been in 63 or near the beginning of 64, before Nero's persecution began. If, on the other hand, he was still in prison when Nero began to play the tyrant, he, probably, as leader of the sect, soon shared the fate of the others, about 64. Hence, this date, or the close of 63, we may consider the date of the writing of the Acts.

4. The impression left on the reader by the closing of the Acts is that the writer's whole story is told. It could not have been told if the writer knew more about the Apostle Paul. It is plain that the book was published soon after the events with which it closes. The two years would have been abundant time to write it, or to complete what may have been already written. It is evidently a finished story. It ends with the word *ἀκωλύτως*, unmolestedly. "The cadence is expressive of stability, of motion succeeded by rest, of action settled in repose, 'an emblem of the history of the church of Christ, and of the life of every true believer in Him.'"
5. The best date for the Gospel of Luke is about 63. The Acts followed at no long interval.
6. There were motives that would lead the writer to publish the Book as soon as possible.

IV. WHERE WAS THE BOOK PUBLISHED?

1. If Luke wrote the Book and published it near the close of Paul's captivity, it was probably at Rome, for he was there with Paul when the Epistles to the Colossians and Philemon were written.
2. This was the opinion of the early Christian Fathers. (Jerome.)
3. The probability of this is strengthened by the fact that Luke makes no mention of Paul's liberation or martyrdom, whichever it was.
 - a.* This would be natural at Rome, because every one there knew the result of Paul's captivity.
 - b.* If he wrote away from Rome, it is hard to explain this omission.
4. The accuracy and minuteness of references to Italian geography suggests that it was written at Rome. xxviii. 12-15.
5. So also do the corresponding explanations about other places, though this evidence must not be pressed. Acts i. 12; v. 17; viii. 26; xxvii. 7, 8, 12, 13.

V. TO WHOM DEDICATED?

Theophilus.

1. Origen supposed him to be a purely fictitious person. He says that all who are beloved by God are Theophili and may therefore appropriate to themselves the books addressed to Theophilus. Salvianus appears to adopt the same view. Theophylact, who believes in his existence, still moralizes upon the name. If it were an ideal person, the name would be *φιλόθεος*. II. Tim. iii. 4. Moreover, *κράτιστε* is not applicable in this sense universally.
2. Calls him *κράτιστε*. Luke i. 4. This word omitted in dedication of Acts i. 1. It is a title either of rank, given to procurators, or of friendship. In the former sense it is used in Acts xxiii. 26; xxiv. 3; xxvi. 25.
3. Theophylact conjectures that he was a Roman governor or person of senatorial rank, grounding the conjecture on the use of *κράτιστε*. Œcumenius tells us he was a governor.
4. Hase and Michaelis identify him with the deposed High Priest, son of Ananias, brother and immediate successor of Jonathan, made High Priest by Vitellius at the Passover of 37, from whom some think Paul got the letters authorizing his persecution of the Christians at Antioch.
5. Alexander Morus makes the hazardous conjecture that the Theophilus of Luke is identical

with the Athenian of the same name recorded by Tacitus as having been condemned for fraud by the court of the Areopagus.

6. Was he an Italian? Luke often explains to him the position and distance of towns in Judea and Galilee. Luke i. 26; iv. 31; viii. 26; xxiv. 13. Not so Italian geography. Acts xxviii. 12-15.
7. He was probably not a Macedonian (Acts xvi. 12), or an Athenian (Acts xvii. 21), or a Cretan (Acts xxvii. 12).
8. The tradition of the Clementine Homilies, middle of the second century: "So that Theophilus, who was at the head of all the men in power at the city (of Antioch), consecrated under the name of a church the great palace in which he resided."
9. We have seen that probably Luke was of Antioch. Was he of the household of Theophilus? He may have been his freedman. Lobeck has noticed that contractions in *as*, as Lucas from Lucanus, Silas from Silvanus, are frequent in the names of slaves.

a. This fact at once prevents the identification of Lucas with Lucius of Cyrene. Acts xiii. 1. Lucas and Lucius are different names.

b. It is not inconsistent with Luke's culture and medical knowledge. Physicians and men of letters frequently belonged to the class of slaves.

c. If Luke had practiced his profession in Antioch, and if he was brought to the faith at the time of the founding of the church in that city (Acts xi. 20-26), the "we" in Acts xvi. 11 becomes easily explicable; for Luke might very probably have desired to accompany Paul in his missionary work, and Troas would be the natural place for him to join him.

d. This accounts also for both the fact and the style of the dedication.

(I) Naturally Luke would dedicate his book to his old master and friend.

(II) Theophilus must have been a cultured man, and Luke would take pains to write the dedication in as elegant Greek as possible.

10. "Until the discovery of printing, the publication of a work was a very costly undertaking; and authors were accustomed to dedicate their works to some high personage of their acquaintance, who could provide the writer an opportunity of reading his production in some select circle, and have the first copies prepared at his own expense."

11. Bar-bahleel, a Syrian lexicographer of the tenth century, says: "Theophilus primus Credentium et celeberrimus apud Alexandrienses, qui cum aliis Aegyptiis Lucam rogabat ut eis evangelium scriberet." The inscription of the

Gospel of Luke in the Syriac version tells us it was published at Alexandria. Alexandria was the centre of the book world of the day. Is this inconsistent with what has been said about Theophilus ?

VI. FOR WHOM WAS THE BOOK WRITTEN?

1. Theophilus, primarily, presumptively to carry forward his Christian education, with the expressed aim of advancing which, Luke had faithfully traced the Gospel history.
2. But an account so wide-reaching in its importance and so intense in its interest, and alone of its kind, must have been designed by the Holy Spirit, probably consciously by Luke also, for a wider circle of readers. If what we have supposed regarding Theophilus be true, he must have been a man of sufficient education and acquaintance with the Roman world not to need the minute suggestions regarding the geography of Macedonia (Acts xvi. 12), or of Crete (Acts xxvii. 12), or the reference to the inquisitive character of the Athenians (Acts xvii. 21).
3. These indications lead to the belief that Luke wrote for a wide circle of readers, a conclusion which, when we remember that the widest circle would be non-Palestinian and Gentile, is strengthened by the following observations:
 - a.* The character of Theophilus, who was a Gentile.
 - b.* The special identification of Luke and Paul with the Gentiles.
 - c.* The analogy of the Gospel of Luke, which was a Gentile Gospel. Luke iv. 16-30; iii. 6.

d. The explanation of geographical relations in Palestine. Acts i. 12; viii. 26; ix. 38.

e. The Gentile-universal character of Acts.

The way Peter was freed from his Gentile scruples. Acts x. The reception of heathen converts into the Church. Acts x. 11. The council at Jerusalem. Acts xv. The large space given to the non-Palestinian work of Paul.

4. These traits did not unfit it for circulation in Palestine among Jewish Christians. They better fitted it for use among the Gentiles. They make it to us the very book needed by us to understand at least a little the growth of the Church and of the conception of the Gospel in the Church.
5. Suggest various reasons why the Book is precious to us. There is nothing else on this period with the exception of Apocryphal books or forgeries, and of inferences from the Epistles. The Book of Acts is one of the best Christian evidences, both as a positive proof and as a refutation of negative criticism. Without the Book of Acts we should lose evidence like that presented in Paley's *Horae Pauline*. We should have an unknown, unbridged gulf between the Gospels and Epistles. We should lose the greatest missionary book.

VII. WHAT WAS THE DESIGN OF THE BOOK?

1. Heinrichs, Kuinöl and others maintain that no particular design should be attributed to the writer beyond that of giving his friend Theophilus a pleasant and instructive narrative of such events as had come under his own notice, either immediately or by report of others.

a. This overlooks the earnest seriousness of the New Testament writers.

b. It omits the constant guiding agency of the Holy Spirit, with His large purposes.

c. From its contents, form, style, spirit, and allusions, the Book is evidently designed for a wider use than that of Theophilus.

2. It has been asserted that the design was to vindicate, for either Peter or Paul, the first place in the Church.

a. In the first twelve chapters our attention is largely fixed upon Peter, and there are works done by him fulfilling the promises made to him by Christ.

(I.) But not to the exclusion of others. Barnabas, Stephen, and Philip complete or anticipate works of Peter. Who first preached to Gentiles? Who baptized the first Gentile convert? Whose is the longest recorded speech in the first half of the book?

(II.) Peter passes wholly out of sight after the first twelve chapters, so far as

regards his own special work. Where is he last mentioned in the Book?

(III.) His subsequent important work and martyrdom are not hinted at. Acts may have been published before the last, but not before some of the former. I Cor. i. 12; iii. 22; I. Peter i. 1.

(IV.) In the council of Jerusalem Peter occupied a place subordinate to James.

b. Paul fills a larger portion of Acts, but the design of the Book cannot be to vindicate the first place for him.

(I.) For much that we learn of him in his Epistles, that most probably was known to Luke, is omitted from the Book. II. Cor. xi. 23-27; II. Thess. iii. 8, 9.

(II.) Luke tells things not altogether to Paul's praise, and omits much which might have been said by way of commendation. Prove this.

c. The deadly enmity between Paul and Peter and their followers pre-supposed by those holding this view did not exist. There were two enemies of Christianity without: Heathenism and unbelieving Judaism; and two parties within, one striving for national supremacy and opposed to the great movement toward Catholicity, and the other pressing onward and outward. Peter and James at the most critical moment gave the whole weight of their authority and influence to this second party, striving to remove obstructions to the

growth of Christianity. This is the testimony of Acts xv., which shows not antagonism, but agreement.

3. Hilgenfeld and others represent the work as written with the express intention of proving a substantial unity of doctrine between the two Apostles. The impression produced by reading the Acts is that this unity existed. Compare for example ii. 39; iii. 15; x. 43; with xiii. 26; xvi. 31; xvii. 31. This impression, however, comes not from intended effect, but from the fact that such an agreement existed.
4. Grotius called the Book a biography of Peter and Paul.
 - a.* This conception is disproven, however, by the reasons urged against the second design suggested above.
 - b.* Much that would be contained in a biography is omitted. How many of the experiences mentioned in II. Cor. ix. 24-33, are related in the Acts? What we learn from Gal. i. 7, ii. 11, and from I. Peter v. 13, we do not learn from the Acts.
5. The design cannot be to give the history of the Apostolic body, for they do not come before the reader in their collective capacity after the introductory chapters, and, with the exception of Peter, James, and John, none of them are mentioned by name after the first chapter. Where in the Book are the "Apostles" spoken of?

6. Baumgarten and Ewald describe the design as the relation of the history of the out-spreading of the Church from Jerusalem to Rome. But this confuses contents with design.
7. Chrysostom holds that the main effect of the Book is to prove the Resurrection. Peter alludes to it six times : i. 22 ; ii. 24 ; iii. 15 ; iv. 10 ; v. 30 ; x. 40. Paul, five times : xiii. 30, 31, 33-37 ; xvii. 3, 31 ; xxvi. 23. This, however, was not the design of the Book.
8. Œcumenius regards the Book in its truest and highest sense, as the Gospel of the Holy Ghost ; following Chrysostom, who says, "The Gospels are a history of what Christ did and said, but the Acts the history of what the other Comforter said and did." There is a large truth here. Study vi. 3, vii. 55, xii. 2, and chapters ii., viii., x., and xix., with this in mind.
9. Luther writes, "In this Book, St. Luke teaches all Christendom, unto the end of the world, the real central principle of Christian doctrine, that we must all be righteous only through faith in Jesus Christ, without any aid of the law or help of our works." Luther sees, as usual, one thing clearly, to the neglect of other things. x. 43, xiii. 39, xvi. 31, are proofs of the truth which Luther indicates ; but to assert that justification is by faith alone was not Luke's design in writing the Book of Acts.
10. Eichorn says, the object was to give a history of missions for the propagation of Christianity.

Farrar calls the Book "A picture of the origins of Christianity." According to Jerome, it is a history of the infancy of the new-born Church.

a. But there is much omitted about which in such a record we should hope to find information,—namely, the distribution from the common store, and the position of women and of young people in the church.

b. Does not this confuse contents and design?

11. Hänlein and Michaelis hold that "the general design of the author of this Book was by means of his narratives to set forth the co-operation of God in the diffusion of Christianity, and, along with that, to prove by remarkable facts the divinity of the Apostles and the perfectly equal right of the Gentiles with the Jews to a participation in the blessings of that religion."
12. Cosmos Indicopleustes declares, that "both in the Gospel and in the Acts Luke relates the ascent of Christ into Heaven and the promise that He will come again, and he completes his work, having before him this one object, to which all must look forward." Examine this thoroughly.
13. The Book of Acts is a "record of the personal action of the Lord Jesus Christ in the first evolution of His Gospel and in the formation of His Church." The design of Luke in writing the Book was to supply, by select and suit-

able instances, an illustration of the power and working of the religion which Jesus had died to establish, and to show that the activity of Jesus was not checked or reduced by His ascent into Heaven, but was exerted even more, because He, had ascended on high, and having gone away had sent the Holy Spirit to teach, help, guide, and extend the Church. That this was the design of the Acts is indicated:

a. By the introduction. Luke refers to his Gospel as an account of the things which Jesus *began* to do and to teach. Baumgarten says, "If, therefore, at the commencement of a second book, all that has been narrated in the first has been characterized as the work of the initiatory labors of Jesus, is not this a plain intimation that in the second book we are to look for an account of the farther continuance of those labors?" Compare Luke xxiv. 19, Acts i. 1, II. Thess. ii. 17, Acts vii. 22, noticing the order of the words. Where does *doing* precede *teaching*, and where does *teaching* precede *doing*?

b. By the way in which Jesus constantly appears as the ruler and judge of His spiritual kingdom. Acts i. 24; ii. 33, 47; iii. 26; xvi. 10; viii. 26; ix. 5, 10; xviii. 9; xxii. 17, 18, 21; xxiii. 11; xxvii. 23, 24. Compare Eph. iv. 10-12; Rev. i. 13, 20; ii. 1.

c. By the frequency with which our eyes are lifted up to Heaven. Acts i. 9-11; ii. 2; vii. 55, 56; ix. 3-5; x. 11-16; xi. 5-10.

This design, of course, governed the selection of facts, and so determined the contents. "We find that by an undeviating course we have followed the development of the true idea of the Church of Christ in its relation, first to the Jewish system out of which it emerges, and then to the great world to which it opens itself. When the words and deeds of Philip or Stephen or Peter or Paul are implicated with this process of things, we find ourselves in their company; but when we part from Peter without notice of his after course, when we leave Paul abruptly at the commencement of his two years in Rome, we are given to understand that we have been reading, not their personal memoirs, but a higher history, which certain parts of their careers serve to embody or to illustrate." The deep design, however, was the bearing of a clear testimony to the ever present, controlling, administrative agency of the risen and ascended Lord, and His un-failing, loving concern for His Church.

There is a needed lesson here for every man. The Book of Acts is a clear rebuke to the practical atheism of our daily life, which regards things as chancing and happening, and does not regard all our life as under the dominance of the living Christ. There is help in a realization of the great truth which the Book of Acts teaches. To each man who has learned that truth it is his conscious joy —

"That evermore beside him on his way
 The unseen Christ shall move,
 That he may lean upon His arm and say,
 'Dear Lord, dost Thou approve?'"

VIII. TITLE OF THE BOOK.

1. The title *πράξεις τῶν ἀποστόλων* is ancient, but is supposed to have been added by some later hand than the author's. In Acts i. 1, Luke calls his Gospel the former treatise. Perhaps he would call the Book of Acts simply a treatise. In the Codex Vaticanus the title is "Acts of Apostles." It is the same in Codex Bezae. In the Codex Sinaiticus it is simply "Acts." The title is thus in the oldest manuscripts.
2. It must have been added very early in the second or third century, for the most ancient versions, the Coptic and the Syraic, retain the Greek word unchanged. The fact that the name was given by writers of these centuries implies a long interval of previous reception.
3. Another evidence of the early date of this name, is the fact that the title "Acts" was given to some of the earliest and best known Apochryphal books. Perhaps the rise of these other Acts affords the explanation of the addition to the simple title *πράξεις* of the words *τῶν ἀποστόλων*. One of these Apochryphal Acts was entitled the "Acts of Paul and Thekla." The writer of it was an ancient presbyter, who was deposed for the forgery, showing the jealous care over the Scriptures exercised by the early Church. The title of the Book varies with different manuscripts. It is "Acts of the Apostles," "Acting of Apostles," "Acts of all the Apostles," "The Acts of the Holy Apostles."

4. The Book has been called also "The Gospel of the Holy Ghost," "The Gospel of the Resurrection," "The Acts of the Holy Ghost."
5. The propriety of the title "The Acts of the Apostles" has been questioned.
 - a.* The Book does not record the acts of all of the Apostles.
 - b.* It does not record all the acts of some of them.
 - c.* It gives full notices of some, like Stephen or Philip, who were not Apostles.
 - d.* The acts that are recorded are often attributed to the Lord Himself or to the Holy Spirit.
6. Properly understood, it is the best title. The Book is a record of acts. These acts were done in the main, so far as human agents were concerned, through the Apostles.

IX. THE SOURCES OF LUKE'S INFORMATION.

What were his sources in the Gospel? Is the case different with Acts?

1. *Oral tradition.*

Luke was a Christian of some standing apparently when he joined Paul at Troas, and most of the events related in the first twelve chapters must have been well known to all Christians in Palestine. The Jerusalem Christians, especially, would remember those early and striking scenes. The practised and retentive memory of them and of other Hebrew disciples, with whom Luke was brought in contact, would be able to reproduce the speeches of Peter and the accurate account of the early days.

2. *Written records.*

It is no very hazardous assumption, nor one at variance with the habits of antiquity, to suppose that the more extended speeches and discourses which Luke did not hear may have been written down by others, and so preserved as they were delivered, and introduced into Luke's hands. At least, the letter sent by the Jerusalem Council to the Gentiles (Acts xv. 24-29), and the letter of Claudias Lysias to Felix (Acts xxiii. 26-30), might have been preserved. Luke's extensive travels, his literary work, his influential position, would have given him access to any written records.

3. *Personal intercourse with the actors.*

To the close of his history, Luke lived in constant intercourse with converts who had been with Peter and the other Apostles, and to whom everything about them had been matters of deepest interest. He must have met Philip in Asia Minor. What could he have learned from him? When did he see Peter? What could he have learned from him? Luke and Paul were accompanied to Jerusalem by Mnason of Cyprus, an old convert who entertained them in his house. At the great feast (Acts xx. 16) all the members of Mary's house, the church of Jerusalem, and many Hebrew converts would be present. Moreover, the stay in Cæsarea would give time for securing information on all needed subjects. What, in the first fifteen chapters, could Luke have learned from Paul?

4. *Personal knowledge and observation.*

From Troas Luke and Paul were companions, with the exception of the time that Luke spent at Philippi (Acts xvii. 1-25). Paul could tell him what happened then, and Luke saw all the rest.

5. *Did Luke avail himself of Paul's Epistles?*

a. Did he know of them?

Yes. It is impossible that he should have been ignorant at least of those written from the first imprisonment, for he sends his greetings in the letter to the

Colossians. From the subscription to II. Corinthians, and from II. Cor. viii. 18, what do you learn of his connection with that letter?

b. Did he use them?

He had the writer of them; that was better than the Epistles. There are close resemblances between the Acts and the Epistles, but these are doubtless due to the fact that their authors were closely associated. Still, if Luke wished to use the Epistles, some of them, at least, were available to him.

6. *There was the breath of inspiration on him.*

The Holy Spirit was presiding over him, guiding him to the choice of right materials, preserving him from error in the use of them, opening up new resources to him, and, over and above him, preparing for the Church through him, the record of the things which the ascended Lord was continuing to do and to teach.

X. THE CREDIBILITY OF THE ACTS.

The Tübingen school attacked the historic credibility of the Acts on the ground of the discordant positions of Peter and of Paul, and of the enmity between the Jewish and Gentile Christians. The root motive was antagonism to the supernatural. With sources like those just enumerated, the presumption is in favor of the truthfulness of the record. Note further:

1. *The testimony of the author.*

The declaration at the beginning of the Gospel, describing his method, applies to the Acts as well. We learn there that it was his habit to avail himself of every possible source of information, in order to ascertain the certainty of what he wrote. He was diligent in securing material, and careful in using it. Notice the consistency of his use of the pronouns "we" and "they." Acts xvi. 11; xvii. 1; xx. 5.

2. *Relation of the Acts to the Pauline Epistles.*

a. Undesigned coincidences. Compare Gal. i. 18; Acts ix. 28; xxii. 17, 18. Examine Paley's *Horae Paulinae*.

b. Omissions in the Acts. Acts ix. 22-24 does not mention, neither does it preclude the possibility of, the journey of which Paul speaks in Gal. i. 17.

Seek other relations between the Acts and the Epistles. Notice that they spring from the

truthfulness of the record, and not from accident or design.

3. The fundamental conception of those who deny the credibility of the Acts,—that is, a rivalry and antagonism between Peter and Paul,—at least, so far as it is made an explanation for the contents, character, and design of the Acts, is controverted by the proved object of the Book already considered.

Moreover, the writer cannot be striving to exalt Peter, for he disappears shortly. He cannot be exalting Paul, for Peter is plainly given first place among the Apostles, and specifies that the twelfth Apostle must be one who “*companied with us*” during the whole ministry of Jesus since John the Baptist. Acts i. 21, 22.

It cannot be that Luke is striving to make it appear that the whole Church was undisturbed by disagreement, since he tells of the differences and quarrels. It cannot be that he is aiming to represent this hostility as constant with one side or the other holding the palm of superiority, for the Council ends with agreement. He is not presenting the Jewish side (Acts xxviii. 28), nor the Gentile side (xxi. 20). His object is simply to write truthful history.

4. *The consistency of the Book with contemporaneous testimony.*

Social and religious customs of different and distant nations. Acts xvii. 21. In Thucydides, Cleon is represented as complaining of his

countrymen that they were in the habit of playing the part of spectators in displays of oratory and listeners to the stories of what others had done, and a like charge is made by Demosthenes in his speeches on the vigorous policy of Philip of Macedon, which he contrasts with the Athenian love of talk and news.

Fluctuating affairs of Jews, Greeks and Romans. Acts v. 34-39; xxiv. 27.

Political arrangements. Acts xvi. 20; xvii. 6; xix. 31-35; xxvi. 32. See on these passages the volume on Acts in the *Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*.

Commercial industries. Acts xvi. 14; xix. 24.

Study also with the same thing in mind, viii. 9; xiii. 17; xvi. 12; xxii. 25-29; xxiv. 24, 27; xxv. 13; xxvii. 1; xxviii. 7.

Geography. xxvii. 7, 12, 28. Recent investigations have shown these soundings off Point Koura, on the northeast side of Crete, to be correct.

Moreover, all these points of contact with contemporaneous life and history arise naturally in the course of the narrative. No unhistoric or unreliable writer would have risked so many minute allusions or could have introduced so many without error.

5. *The speeches of Paul, Peter, and James.*

It is alleged that we have different views in the mouths of these Apostles in their speeches from those derived from their writings. What would be the consequence if it were granted

that the speeches bore in some sense the impress of Luke? Would it destroy their accuracy or reliability? The fact of the alleged divergence, however, cannot be shown.

a. Paul.

Compare, by way of illustration, his farewell address to the elders of Ephesus at Miletus with his Epistles. Notice the corresponding teaching in each.

(I.) Allusions to his pastoral fidelity. Acts xx. 18-21; I. Thess. ii. 10; II. Cor. vi. 3, 4.

(II.) As an answer to calumnies and an incitement to holy living. Acts xx. 31-35; II. Cor. i. 12; I. Cor. xi. 1; Phil. iii. 17.

(III.) His tenderness and gentleness. Acts xx. 31; II. Cor. ii. 4; x. 1; I. Thess. ii. 7; Eph. iv. 32; II. Tim. ii. 24; Gal. v. 22.

(IV.) His loving diligence. Acts xx. 20; I. Thess. ii. 11; II. Tim. iv. 2.

(V.) His boldness in preaching and his freedom from the fear of man. Acts xx. 27; I. Thess. ii. 4 (Is the Gospel a gift or a trust? I. Cor. iv. 1, 2; I. Tim. i. 11, Romans i. 14, 15); II. Cor. iv. 2.

(VI.) He anticipates persecution in Jerusalem. Acts xx. 22, 23; Romans xv; 31.

(VII.) His estimate of his life. Acts xx. 24; xxi. 13; Phil. ii. 17; II. Tim. iv. 6, 7.

(VIII.) Presage of future dangers to the Church. Acts xx. 29, 30; I. Tim. iv. 1. Does the Epistle to the Ephesians, written subsequently, indicate that these fears were fulfilled?

(IX.) His commendation and blessing. Acts xx. 32; Romans xvi. 25.

(X.) His manual labor. Acts xx. 33, 34; I. Thess. ii. 9; II. Thess. iii. 8; I. Cor. iv. 12; I. Cor. ix. 12; II. Cor. ii. 8.

(XI.) Acts xx. 34, "these hands." It would be just like Paul to stretch out before them his hands worn rough by hard toil. The Lord had held out His hands. John xx. 20; Luke xxiv. 39.

(XII.) Moreover, the quotation of Christ's words in Acts xx. 35, words not recorded in the Gospels, is just like Paul.

b. Peter.

His Epistles and his speeches in the Acts correspond:

(I.) In their representations of our Lord's office and person.

(II.) In their use of prophecy, more complete and circumstantial than the use of the other New Testament writers. Acts ii. 25; I. Peter ii. 6.

“Peter and Paul agree in interpreting the predictions and intimations of the prophets from Moses to Samuel as having a perfect fulfillment in Christ, but, for proof of this fulfillment, Peter appeals rather to the personal knowledge of himself and fellow disciples. I. Peter ii. 21. On the other hand, Paul appeals rather to the manifestations of power by the risen Saviour. Romans viii. 35-37.”

(III.) In their references to the Holy Ghost. Acts ii. 33; I. Peter i. 12.

(IV.) In their reference to Christ as the corner stone. Acts iv. 11; I. Peter ii. 6.

(V.) In their use of *ξύλον* for cross. Acts v. 30; x. 39; I. Peter ii. 24. This word is used in the New Testament for cross elsewhere only in Gal. iii. 13, which is quoted from Deuteronomy xxi. 23. Paul elsewhere uses *σταῦρος*.

c. James.

Only one speech. Only one Epistle. These, however, correspond.

(I.) Compare Acts xv. 17 with James ii. 7.

(II.) The Epistle is just such a letter as we should expect from a man like James in such a position.

(1) Protest against pride and hypocrisy. James i. 26, 27; ii. 1, 2; iii. 17; iv. 6.

(2) Condemnation of half heartedness. James i. 6; iv. 4.

(3) Insistence upon works. James ii. 17, 26.

(4) Citation of Old Testament characters. James ii. 21, 25; v. 11, 17.

(III.) The Epistle evinces no spirit contrary to the temper of James at the Jerusalem council. James iii. 17.

6. *The fine delineations of character in the Acts.*

“Peter, among his own people, in the presence of a mixed and at first in great part unsympathetic audience, before authorities bent on suppressing his testimony and armed with full power for his destruction, preaching, working, anxiously meditating, drawn onward to new developments, at first reluctantly, with mental struggles and perplexity, but, when once convinced, acting promptly and decisively, meeting persecution unto the death fearlessly, candid in estimating the conduct, generous in supporting the position, of an Apostle in whom a common man would have recognized an opponent and a rival. Paul, standing on the same level of nobleness, but gifted with transcendent mental powers, with passions both before and after conversion far more easily excited, called on to bear witness to truth once hated before the representatives of all that was evil or prejudiced, ignorant or haughtily intellectual, sensual or ar-

rogant, ignoble or noble, in the ancient world; in all circumstances showing the same fundamental character, stern, zealous, unshakable, but adapting himself to all circumstances with a versatility and power of adaptation so marvelous as to have supplied cavilers with their most effective weapons of assault, but such as supply candid and earnest students with materials for realizing a character unrivalled in its influence upon all regions of spiritual life and thought." This same truthful skill can be seen in a study of the smaller characters: on the one hand Elymas, Ananias, Simon, Demetrius, Felix, the Herods, and on the other Barnabas, Stephen, Philip, Apollos, James, Sergius Paulus, Festus, Julius, and Publius.

7. *The moral spirit of the Book.*

No clearer or more impressive sermon against falsehood has ever been preached than the story of Ananias and Sapphira. The writer of such a story, we cannot believe, would have been guilty of the offence he so terribly reproveth. Everywhere "there is manifest throughout the Book of Acts," says Prof. Fisher, "a penetrating discernment of the sacredness of truth and the obligation of veracity." The Book furnishes a bracing moral atmosphere for a student.

8. The question of credibility is not the same as the question of inspiration. Waiving the latter question, if only the Book of Acts is credible

what is the consequence to each earnest, honest man?

a. To the non-Christian. If he reads it candidly, he will feel the spell of —

“The unheard music whose faint echoes even
Make whosoever hears a homesick soul
Thereafter, till he follow it to heaven.”

As long as he reads this Book he breathes air fragrant with the presence of the living and loving Lord.

b. To the Christian. Let the student stop for a moment to think of a few of the practical lessons from the Book,—the lesson of a simple, generous Christian life, in which the Holy Spirit is a vital, dominating power, which is filled with an undimmed sense of the presence of Christ, which seeks and occupies the place to which Christ assigns it, and —

“Striveth not to please God more
(Which meaneth otherwise) than as God please.”

Let the student read and adopt Waring’s hymn :

“Father, I know that all my life
Is portioned out for me.”

XI. LANGUAGE, STYLE, AND TEXT.

1. The Greek is purer than that of most other Books of the New Testament, and purer in the latter part and the preface than elsewhere. The Hebraisms are almost always found in the accounts of speeches.
2. The style is "clear, dignified, and lively." Michaelis says, the writer "has well supported the character of each person he has introduced as delivering a public harangue, and has very faithfully and happily preserved the manner of speaking which was peculiar to each of his orators."
3. Text. It is not a very certain text. The following manuscripts of importance contain the Book either in whole or in part:—

Codex Sinaiticus.

Codex Alexandrinus.

Codex Vaticanus.

Codex Ephraemi Rescriptus.

Codex Bezae.

Codex Laudianus.

For a brief account of these manuscripts, read the "Summary of Documentary Evidence" in Westcott and Hort's Greek Testament.

XII. THE RELATION OF THE ACTS TO THE GOSPELS.

Let the student note the historic relations. The present lesson is rather upon the spiritual and doctrinal relations. The last chapter of the Gospel of John seems to reach forward to the Acts. "The miracle, which had already foreshadowed the work of the fishers of men, is repeated, but with altered circumstances, typical of the change which was at hand. For now the Lord is no longer with them in the ship, but stands dimly seen upon the shore; yet from thence He issues His directions and shows the presence of His power working with them in their seemingly lonely toil. Then the charge is left to feed His sheep; and, lastly, the future destinies of the two chief Apostles are suffered to be faintly seen."

1. Luke's Gospel was the account of what Jesus began both to do and teach until the day in which He was taken up after that He through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the Apostles whom He had chosen. The first chapter of the Book of Acts includes an account of the last days of Christ upon the earth.

The Acts, therefore, overlaps the Gospels.

Matthew ends with Jesus risen. Matt. xxviii.

Mark ends with Jesus risen and ascended.

Mark xvi. 19.

Luke ends with Jesus risen, promising the Holy Ghost, and ascended. Luke xxiv. 49-51.

John ends with Jesus risen and promising the Holy Ghost and to come again. John xxi. 14; xiv. 16; xiv. 3.

The Acts begins with the Resurrection, the promising of the Holy Ghost and of His return, and the Ascension. It is connected, therefore, with Matthew by the first, with Mark by the first and fourth, with Luke by the first, second, and fourth, with John by the first, second, and third,—with all by the Great Commission. The Acts meets each Gospel somewhere between the Cross and the Crown.

2. The most common emphatic testimony of the Gospels is to the Resurrection and the Crucifixion. These chords are repeatedly struck in the Acts.

a. The Crucifixion,

In the Gospels. Matthew xxvii. 35; Mark xv. 25; Luke xxiii. 33; John xix. 17, 18. The word crucify occurs in Matthew eleven times, in Mark nine times, in Luke six, and in John twelve.

In the Acts. Acts ii. 36; ii. 23; iii. 15; iv. 10; x. 39.

b. The Resurrection.

In the Gospels. Matt. xxviii. 16; Mark xvi. 6; Luke xxiv. 6; John xx. 9.

In the Acts. i. 3, 22; ii. 24; iii. 15; iv. 10, 33; x. 40; xiii. 30; xvii. 3, 31; xxvi. 23.

3. *Reminiscences in the Acts of the works and words of Christ.*

a. Acts x. 38. Compare Matt. iii. 16, 17; xi. 4, 5; John viii. 29.

b. Peter's vision and the parable. Acts x. 11-14; Mark vii. 15; Matt. xv. 15.

c. The Holy Ghost and John the Baptist. Acts xi. 16; Matt. iii. 11; John i. 26, 33.

4. *The Acts is a record of the fulfillment of promises made in the Gospels.*

a. Of the Holy Spirit.

(I.) As a help in utterance. Matt. x. 19, 20; Mark xiii. 11. Fulfilled in Acts iv. 8-12; vii. 2-53; xxii. 3-21. Where else?

(II.) As an abiding power. Luke xxiv. 49; Acts ii. 1-4; viii. 19.

b. The endurance of suffering and shame. Matt. v. 11; xxiv. 9; Mark xiii. 3; Luke vi. 22; John xv. 18, 19; Acts v. 41; vii. 54; ix. 1; xxii. 22.

5. *The frequency and the manner of the mention of Galilee in the first part of the Acts.*

Note the music of the names of places associated with Christ. Read the old hymn "Sweet Galilee." The sweet memories of Galilee seem to have lingered in the minds of Christ's friends, and the word is recalled often. Christ had been closely associated with Galilee. The name occurs in Matthew

seventeen times, in Mark twelve, in Luke fifteen, and in John seventeen. Look up the passages. It occurs in Acts i. 11; ii. 7; v. 37; ix. 31; x. 37; xiii. 31. It is not mentioned in the rest of the New Testament.

6. *Mention of John the Baptist, and that in the most widely scattered places, showing where the knowledge of the forerunner had gone.*

a. By the risen Lord. Acts i. 5.

b. By Peter. Acts i. 22; x. 37; xi. 16.

c. By Paul. Acts xiii. 24, 25.

d. In connection with Apollos. Acts xviii. 24, 25.

e. By the disciples at Ephesus. Acts xix. 2-4.

7. *Peter is the link between the Gospels and the Acts.*

His character is developed to be sure, but some of the same root traits are manifest.

a. Boldness. Luke xxii. 54, 55; John xxi. 7; Acts iv. 13.

b. Leadership. Matt. xvii. 4; John xxi. 3; Acts i. 15; ii. 14.

c. Faith. Luke v. 5; Matt. xiv. 28, 29. Note Bengel's saying, "Mergere nos patitur sed non submergere Christus." Acts x; iii. 1-11.

d. Self-will. Luke xxii. 33; John xiii. 8; Acts x. 13, 14.

e. Teachableness. Luke ix. 20; xxii. 62; Acts iv. 13; x; xv. 7-11.

8. *The place of the Acts in the development of doctrine in the New Testament.*

Read Bernard's *Progress of Doctrine*. The Acts is a continuance of the Gospels. They relate what Jesus began, it what Jesus continued, to do and teach. The authority is the same, the method of teaching different. Then it was by the personal Christ, bodily present: now through the Holy Ghost habitually dwelling in them. This was an expedient change. John xvi. 7. It was an advance. In the former the teaching power is separated from and external to the mind taught; in the latter it is interfused and commingled with it. The words in the one are divine announcements, fitted to form the apprehensions of men; in the other, expressions of human apprehensions already formed under divine agency. The facts were all finished when Jesus was glorified. The Acts must go on to the interpretation of the facts, manifesting their effects in the world of spirit and their results in human consciousness.

There is then an advance in doctrine. The general character is shown in the declaration, "They ceased not to teach and preach Jesus the Christ." Acts viii. 5, 35; ix. 20; xi. 20; xvii. 18. Compare this with the preaching in the Gospels. Jesus comes preaching the Kingdom of God. Luke ix. 2; Matt. iv. 23; Mark

i. 14. So the disciples were sent out, charged to tell no man that He was Jesus the Christ. Matt. xvi. 20. They were forbidden even to tell of the transfiguration until the Son of Man should be risen from the dead. Matt. xvii. 9; John x. 24; Mark xiv. 61. The key-note changes in the Acts. In Matthew we have the idea of a kingdom, in John the idea of a person, predominant. Acts combines them. Acts viii. 12; xxviii. 23, 31. The character of the preaching is changed. Acts. ii. 36. So also is the effect changed. Compare the little company of believers when Jesus went away (Acts i. 15; I. Cor. xv. 6; Matt. xxviii. 17) with the large numbers in Acts ii. 41, vi. 7, xxi. 20. These were works wrought in fulfillment of Christ's promise. John xiv. 12. The preaching in the Acts was the preaching of Jesus and the Resurrection, and forgiveness of sins. It was the idea of a Divine Person living in individual lives which was impressed upon men, rather than the idea of a kingdom, of an institution, of a system.

XIII. THE RELATION OF THE ACTS TO THE EPISTLES.

Its special relations can be studied best in connection with the lives of the men mentioned in the Acts and the Epistles. View it now generally.

1. *The Acts furnishes the setting of the Epistles.*

a. Suppose the book of Acts did not exist. What questions would the first verses of the Epistle to the Romans raise in your mind?

b. The Acts gives us a conception of the general religious conditions of the time.

c. It gives us a better view of the historic relations of the Epistles.

2. *It helps to answer the questions raised in the introduction to the Epistles, especially the questions of time and place of writing.*

Take the Epistle to the Romans as illustration:—

a. The place.

(I.) Romans xvi. 1; Acts xviii. 18.

(II.) Romans xvi. 23; I. Cor. i. 14.

(III.) Romans xvi. 23; II. Tim. iv. 20;
Acts xix. 22.

b. The time.

(I.) Paul had not yet been at Rome.
Romans i. 11. It was therefore before 62.

(II.) He is still free and intending to visit Rome after he has been at Jerusalem. Romans xv. 23-25; Acts xix. 21. It was before 59, therefore, because he was a prisoner then.

(III.) He is approaching the end of his ministry in the East. Romans xv. 19. He could not have written these words until after his residence at Ephesus, which terminated at Pentecost in the year 57. It was written, therefore, between 57 and 59.

(IV.) He was apprehensive of harm on his approaching visit to Jerusalem, which was near at hand. Romans xv. 30-32. What passages in Acts sound like this?

(V.) When he wrote he had in his hands a collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem, whither he was bound. Romans xv. 26, 27; Acts xxiv. 17.

(VI.) It was written after I. Corinthians, for I. Corinthians was written —

(1) At Ephesus. I. Cor. xvi. 8.

(2) Before the collection at Corinth for the saints. I. Cor. xvi. 1.

(3) Before his journey to Corinth via Macedon. I. Cor. xvi. 5.

(VII.) It was written after II. Corinthians.

(1) II. Corinthians was written from Macedonia. II. Cor. ii. 13.

(2) At this time he did not have the collection from Achaia. II. Cor. ix. 1-6.

(VIII.) Since he had the offering of Achaia when he wrote to the Romans (Romans xv. 26), he must have reached Corinth, whither he was journeying. II. Cor. ix. 4; xiii. 1.

(IX.) We learn from Acts xx. 3, that Paul was three months in Greece and left to go to Jerusalem. The letter was written at this time, probably in the Spring of 59.

(X.) It was not later than this for —

(1) Paul was not again in Corinth during the period covered by the Acts, in which period Romans was written. Romans i. 11.

(2) The Jews laid wait for him as he was about to sail from Greece for Syria. Acts xx. 3. He changed his route, going back through Macedonia. This treachery is not mentioned in Romans xv. 31, where the enmity of the Jews is spoken of. Romans was probably written, therefore, before his departure.

(XI.) Acts xx. 6. Paul and his company spent the days of unleavened bread at Philippi, and must, therefore, have left Corinth some time before the Passover,

and yet after the winter was over and the sea clear, for he had intended to sail for Syria.

3. *Acts corroborates the Epistles as they corroborate the Acts.*

See again Paley's *Horae Paulinae*.

It is sufficient, by way of illustration, to note the consistency of Acts and Epistles in their representation of the source of the persecutions to which Paul was subjected. From Gal. iv. 29, v. 11, vi. 17, it appears that these persecutions were from the hands or at the instigation of the Jews; that they were prompted, not by Paul's preaching Christianity in opposition to heathenism, but from his preaching it as distinct from Judaism. This perfectly coincides with what we learn from the Acts. Acts ix. 23; xiii. 50; xiv. 1, 2, 19; xvii. 4, 5, 13; xviii. 12.

There are only two instances where Paul was ever assailed by the Gentiles of their own accord, not stirred up by the Jews, and in these two, the persons who incited the feeling against him were moved by mercenary motives. Acts xvi. 19; xix. 23-41.

4. *The Resurrection in Acts and Epistles.*

a. The Acts.

Find all the passages teaching the Resurrection. Notice how the speeches generally end with an assertion of the Resurrection.

b. The Epistles.

Romans i. 4; iv. 25; vi. 4, 5, 9; I. Cor. xv. 12-23; II. Cor. v. 15; Eph. ii. 5; Phil. iii. 10; Col. iii. 1; I. Thess. i. 10; II. Tim. ii. 8; I. Peter i. 3. What is the significance of the Resurrection to you?

5. *Acts and Epistles are consistent in their representation of the manner of Paul's conversion.*

Acts ix. 1-6; xxii. 5-13; xxvi. 12-18; I. Cor. xv. 8, 9; Gal. i. 13; I. Tim. i. 13, 15.

6 *The character of Paul.*

The Acts is linked to the Gospels—the past—by Peter; to the Epistles—the future—by Paul. His Epistles show his character more fully, but it is the same character, many of whose noble traits are manifest in the Acts.

a. His tact and versatility.

Acts xvi. 27; xvii. 22-32; xxii.; xxiv. 10; xxvi. 26-29. Notice it in the Epistle to Philemon, and observe his own testimony. I. Cor. ix. 20-22.

b. His sympathetic nature.

In the Acts. xx. 19; xxvii. 23-25, 33, 34; xxviii. 15.

In the Epistles. II. Cor. i. 7; ii. 13; Phil. ii. 27, 28; I. Tim. i. 2; II. Tim. i. 2; Philemon 1. Observe especially Paul's tenderness, and the freedom with which he

expressed his affection. Love saved him from many blunders. It will save us. Read Sill's "The Fool's Prayer."

c. Strict conscientiousness.

Acts xxiii. 1; xxiv. 16; xxvi. 9; II. Cor. i. 12; II. Tim. i. 3; Philemon 18.

d. His tenacity of purpose.

Acts xx. 24; xxi. 13; Phil. iii. 13, 14; I. Cor. ix. 26; II. Tim. iv. 7.

Have you learned this lesson? Have you mastered this truth?

"We rise by the things that are under our feet,
By what we have mastered of good and of gain,
By the pride deposed and the passion slain,
By the vanquished ills that we hourly meet."

Recall Sir T. Fowell Buxton's remark: "The longer I live, the more certain I am that the great difference between men, the feeble and the powerful, the great and the insignificant, is *energy and invincible determination*,—a purpose once fixed, and then death or victory. That quality will do anything that can be done in this world, and no talents, no circumstances, no opportunities, will make a two-legged creature a man without it."

e. Trace his utter unselfishness of life in both Acts and Epistles, observing how fully he exemplified the words of good Thomas Fuller: "The good soldier begrudgeth not to get a probability of victory by the certainty of his own death, and fleeth from nothing so much as

from the mention of flying; and though some say he is a madman, our soldier knoweth that he shall possess the reward of his valor with God in heaven, and also, making the world his executor, leave to it the rich inheritance of his memory."

f. Faith in the Scriptures.

Acts .xvi. 13-41; xxiv. 14, (compare Luke xxiv. 25); xxvi. 22; xxviii. 23; Rom. iii. 2; iv. 3; xvi. 26; Gal. iii. 18; II. Tim. iii. 15-17.

g. Study carefully the representation of Paul as an endurer of sufferings, both in the Acts and in the Epistles. Reflect steadily upon the lessons to be derived from such a study. Notice the proof of Ugo Bassi's words:

"The vine from every living limb bleeds wine;
Is it the poorer for that spirit shed?
The drunkard and the wanton drink thereof;
Are they the richer for that gift's excess?
Measure thy life by loss instead of gain;
Not by the wine drunk, but the wine poured forth;
For love's strength standeth in love's sacrifice,
And whoso suffers most hath most to give."

7. *The Acts forms a bridge between the Gospels and the Epistles.*

Without it, open Romans and read "Paul an Apostle * * * * to all that be in Rome." The questions would at once arise, with no means of answering them: Who was Paul? How did the Gospel get to Rome? But what is the doctrinal relation between the Acts and

the Epistles? The discourses in the Acts, save Paul's speeches at Miletus and Jerusalem, are addressed to those who were not Christians. But how were men taught after they had believed? The design of the Book of Acts did not include an answer to that. "The facts of the manifestation of Christ have been completed and have been testified in all fullness and certainty by the witnesses chosen of God. They have not only testified of the facts. They have summed them up, have announced their scope and purpose in the councils of God, as effecting the redemption of the world, and have called men to partake in the fruits of that redemption by believing and being baptized. They have given this testimony, not as of themselves, but with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Thus a Holy Church is formed which proves itself Catholic, expansive, but unified. Within it arises a communion of saints; and, in one faith, its members believe they have found the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting."

The creed is complete. Here the Book of Acts leaves us. But this was a new world of thought to the Christians. "Into it they carried all the tendencies and perversions of our nature, and revealed truth had to settle itself in lasting forms, find adequate expression and have its moral and social consequences deduced under influences uncongenial to itself." So critical a period, on which the whole future

of the Gospel hung, cried aloud and not in vain for the continued action of the living word of God. The Spirit, therefore, spoke in the Epistles. The point to note now, however, is that the Acts is the absolutely essential link between the Gospels and the Epistles. A link is an incompleteness and the Acts in itself is incomplete. It is a Book a large part of whose mission was the preparation for larger things to come after. It is like some men whose chief glory is that they prepare the way for other men and help in their development, without whom they "should not be made perfect."

XIV. THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE ACTS.

Critics are disagreed upon the subject. Let the student investigate for himself and fix some of the more important dates

1. *The dates of the four following events are more or less certain:—*

a. xi. 28. The famine in the days of Claudius, 44 and 45 A.D.

b. xii. 23. The death of Agrippa I., 44 A.D.

c. xviii. 2. The decree for the expulsion of the Jews from Rome, 49 A.D. Although Pearson makes it 52 A.D.

d. xxiv. 27. The recall of Felix, 60 A.D.

2. *Contemporaneous chronology.*

a. The Roman Emperors.

Make a list of them, and memorize the list with the dates of their reigns.

b. Procurators.

Pontius Pilate, 26–37 A.D.

Claudius Felix, 53–60 A.D.

Porcius Festus, 60–62 A.D.

c. Kings.

Herod Agrippa I., 39–44 A.D. Acts xii. 1.

Agrippa II., King of Chalcis, 48 A.D. advanced to the Tetrarchies of Philip and Lysanias subsequently.

d. High Priests.

Caiaphas, 25-37 A.D.

Jonathan, 37-38 A.D.

Theophilus, 39-42 A.D.

Simon, 42 A.D.

Matthias, 42 A.D.

Elionæus, 43-45 A.D.

Joseph, 45-47 A.D.

Ananias, 47-59 A.D.

Ishmael, 59-61.

Joseph Cabi, 61 A.D.

3. *What were the dates of the events recorded in Acts i. 9, ii. 4, vii. 58-60?*

4. *Chronology of main events in Paul's life.*

Conversion. ix. 1-20. 36 A.D.

First ministry in Antioch. xi. 25-30. 44, 45, A.D.

First missionary journey. xiii., xiv. 45 A.D.

Second missionary journey. xv. 36 - xviii. 22. 51-54 A.D.

Second ministry in Antioch. xiv. 28 - xv. 35. 46-51 A.D.

Apostolic council. xv. 6-29. 50 A.D.

Third missionary journey. xviii. 23 - xxi. 16. 54-58 A.D.

Last visit to Jerusalem. xxi. 17 - xxiii. 35. 58 A.D.

Imprisonment in Cæsarea. xxiv. - xxvi. 58-60 A.D.

Voyage to Rome. xxvii – xxviii. 15. 60–61 A.D.

First imprisonment at Rome. xxviii. 16–31. 61–63 A.D.

5. *Other events.*

What were the dates of the conversion of Cornelius, the founding of the Antioch Church, and the martyrdom of James?

XV. THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE ACTS.

1. *What countries are referred to?*

ii. 9-11 (What was the land of Elim? Compare Genesis x. 22; Isaiah xi. 11; xxi. 22 Daniel viii. 2); viii. 27; xi. 19; xv. 23; xvi. 9; xviii. 2, 12. Locate all these.

2. *The seas.*

What seas were included in that part of the world in which the events recorded in the Acts occurred?

2. *The islands.*

ii. 11; iv. 36; xvi. 11; xx. 15; xxi. 1; xxviii. 1, 12, 16.

4. *The provinces of Palestine.*

What were they? Where are they named in the Book?

5. *Provinces of Asia Minor.*

vi. 9; xiii. 13, 14; xiv. 6; xv. 23; xvi. 6, 7; xviii. 2; xxvii. 5.

What provinces are not named in the Book?

6. *The mountains of Palestine.*

Become familiar with their names and associations, and locate them, not forgetting the following: Olives, Zion, Ebal, Gerizim, Tabor, Lebanon, Gilboa, Hermon, Carmel.

7. *The plains of Palestine.*

Locate the following: Phœnicia, Sharon, Philistia, Esdraleon, the Negeb, Hauran, the Jordan Valley.

8. *The towns of Palestine.*

Study the more familiar ones in each of the three divisions of the land. Add to the following list: ii. 22; iv. 16; viii. 26, 40; ix. 32, 35, 43.

9. *Other cities.*

ii. 10; vi. 9; ix. 2, 30; xi. 20; xii. 20; xvi. 14; xxvii. 2.

10. *The dimensions of Western Palestine.*

Its area was 6,600 square miles, less than the area of Massachusetts.

From Dan to Beersheba was 180 miles; from Gaza to Sidon, coast line, 180 miles; from Dan to the Mediterranean Sea, 25 miles; from the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean, passing Gaza, 60 miles. The Jordan Valley, from Dan to the Dead Sea, was 134 miles long.

11. *Natural divisions of Palestine.*

a. The Maritime Plain, 8 to 20 miles wide.

b. The Shephelah, foot hills, 300 to 500 feet high.

c. The mountain region, 2,500 to 4,000 feet high.

d. Jordan Valley, 2 to 14 miles wide, 600 to 1,000 feet below the sea level.

e. The Eastern table land.

12. *Paul's missionary journeys.*

Be sure to master the geography of these, so that you can repeat from memory his route on each journey.

a. The first journey, starting from Antioch. xiii. 4 - xiv. 28.

b. The second, starting from Antioch. xv. 36 - xviii. 22.

c. The third, starting from Antioch. xviii. 23 - xxi. 15.

d. The voyage to Rome. xxvii. 1 - xxviii. 16.

XVI. SOME SUMMARIES.

1. *The discourses of the Acts.*

a. Peter.

i. 15-22; ii. 14-40; iii. 12-26; iv. 8-12;
iv. 19, 20; v. 3, 4; v. 29-32; viii. 20-23;
x. 34-43; xi. 5-17; xv. 7-11.

b. The Twelve.

vi. 2-4.

c. Gamaliel.

v. 34-39.

d. Stephen.

vii. 2-53.

e. James.

xv. 13-21.

f. Paul.

xiii. 16-41; xiii. 46, 47; xiv. 15-17;
xvii. 22-31; xx. 7; xx. 18-35; xxii. 1-21;
xxiii. 1-6; xxiv. 10-21; xxv. 10, 11;
xxvi. 1-23; xxviii. 17-20, 25-28.

g. Tertullus.

xxiv. 2-8.

h. Festus.

xxv. 14-21, 24-27.

i. James and the elders.

xxi. 20-25.

2. *Miracles.*

i. 3, 9, 11; ii. 1-4; iii. 1-10; iv. 31; v. 1-11,
12-16, 19; vi. 8; viii. 13; viii. 39, 40; ix. 1-9,
33, 34, 36-41; x. 46; xi. 28; xii. 1-19; xiii. 2,

12; xiv. 3, 8-10; xvi. 16-18, 25, 40; xix. 6, 11, 12, 15, 16; xx. 6-12; xxviii. 3-6, 8.

With regard to each of these miracles, let the student ask the following questions: Where wrought? By whom? When? How? With what result? With what spiritual meaning and significance?

3. *Guidance by visions.*

v. 19-21; vii. 55; viii. 26; ix. 3, 10-16; x. 3-6, 11-16; xii. 7; xvi. 9; xviii. 9, 10; xxvii. 23, 24.

Study each one of these discriminatingly, noticing the subjective condition of the person guided, and the divine purposes in the guidance.

What general spiritual lesson is there for us?

4. *Conversions.*

ii. 41, 47; iv. 4; v. 14; vi. 1; viii. 6, 26-39; ix. 1-20, 31, 35, 42; x. 24, 44; xi. 21; xii. 24; xiii. 12, 43, 48; xiv. 1; xvi. 5, 14, 15, 30; xvii. 4, 14, 34; xviii. 8; xix. 8; xxviii. 24.

Regarding each conversion, notice by what human agent it was wrought. What means were used? What part did personal testimony and the Scriptures play? What seems to have been the argument which had the greatest influence? How far were apologetics used? What did the converts do? Where and when did the conversion take place? Was the convert Jew or Gentile? Note the points of

interest, especially the intense earnestness of the early Christians in leading men to Christ. They knew the value of the human soul. They knew the love of Christ for that soul, and they wanted each soul to find its true dwelling place in Him as Head.

“For sadder sight than eye can know,
Than proud bark lost or seaman’s woe,
Or battle fire, or tempest cloud,
Or prey-bird’s shriek, or ocean shroud,
The shipwreck of a soul.”

5. *Letters.*

xv. 23-29; xxiii. 26-30.

6. *Assaults, personal abuse, and persecution.*

v. 41; viii. 1, 3; xix. 1, 2, 23, 29; xi. 19; xii. 3, 4, 5; xiii. 45, 50; xiv. 2, 5, 19; xvi. 20, 23; xvii. 5; xviii. 12; xix. 29; xx. 3; xxi. 27; xxii. 25; xxiii. 2, 10, 12.

Who instigated these attacks? Who made them? What was the motive? What was the result? “Truth, like a torch, the more it’s shook, the more it shines.”

7. *Imprisonment.*

iv. 3; v. 18; xii. 3, 4, 5; xvi. 23; xxiii. 10, 35; xxiv. 27; xxviii. 16, 30.

Inquire who was imprisoned. By whom and where? For what offences and how long? What was their attitude during their imprisonment and how were they liberated?

8. *Martyrs.*

vii. 54-60; xii. 2.

Eusebius relates, from a work of Clemens, who received it from tradition, that the accuser of James was converted by the confession which James made, and went with James to martyrdom, having been first kissed by him, with the words, "Peace be to thee."

9. *Trials or hearings.*

a. Before Jewish councils.

iv. 6; v. 21-27; vi. 12; xxii. 30; xxiii.

b. Before Roman magistrates or rulers of cities.

xvi. 20; xvii. 6; xviii. 12; xxii. 24; xxiv. 1; xxv. 6, 23.

c. Before irresponsible heathen.

xix. 29.

10. *Synagogues where the Gospel was preached.*

Let the student get from some good book, such as Conybeare and Howson's "Life of Paul," a true idea of the conditions of the Jews at the time, understanding the centralizing tendencies of Palestinian Judaism and the centrifugal tendencies of the Diaspora with the Septuagint and the synagogue. Note how the break came gradually between Judaism and

Christianity, and how for a long time the Gospel was preached first to the Jew.

Observe, first of all, that the Apostles continued to go to the temple. iii. 1, 11; v. 21, 42. Observe, further, Paul's course of action. xiii. 5, 14; xiv. 1; xvii. 1, 2, 10, 17; xviii. 4, 26; xix. 8. The Jews, with the little company of proselytes gathered around them, offered a field in which the Gospel story was first told in every city. Strabo declared, "Already a Jewish population has entered every city, and it is not easy to find a place in the habitable world which has not received this race and is not possessed by it." Paul began his Christian service this way (ix. 20), following in the footsteps of One who had "taught in the synagogues, being glorified in all." Luke iv. 15. Compare Matt. iv. 23; ix. 35; xiii. 54; Mark i. 21, 39; vi. 2; Luke xiii. 10; John xviii. 29.

11. *Councils of Christians.*

i. 13, 15; ii. 1; v. 2; vi. 2; xi. 2; xii. 12, xiv. 27; xv. 4-30; xx. 17; xxi. 18.

Having carefully studied these and the spirit which marks them, how far are you prepared to agree with Lightfoot's words, "However great may be the theological differences and religious animosities of our own time, they are far surpassed in magnitude by the distractions of an age which, closing our eyes to facts, we are apt to invest with an ideal excellence"?

12. *Disputations.*

vi. 9; ix, 22, 29; xvii. 17; xviii. 28; xix. 9;
xxviii. 17-29.

Observe in each case the persons, the circumstances, the spirit, and the issue.

XVII. THE SUBSTANCE OF THE CHAPTERS.

Chapter I. Introduction. Last days of Jesus. His ascension. The first prayer meeting. The choice of the twelfth Apostle.

Chapter XVIII. Paul leaves Athens and goes to Corinth; from there to Ephesus; and thence to Cæsarea, Jerusalem and Antioch. The appearance of Apollos.

Analyze each chapter in this way, summarizing results, so that the substance of the whole Book is at your tongue's end. Be able to tell in which chapter any given event occurs, and what events are contained in any given chapter.

Pick out some one verse in each chapter which is the best representative verse. Compare the Revised Version with the King James Version, and, if you are able, with the Greek. Constantly repeat these verses. They will help in the mastery of the Book, and in your own practical life.

XVIII. THE CHARACTERS OF THE ACTS.

I. *Simon Peter.*

a. His life.

(1.) His life as recorded in the Book of Acts.

Study the following events in their order:—

(1) i. 13. Notice the position of his name in the list of Apostles. He is first. Compare Matt. x. 2; Mark iii. 16; Luke vi. 14.

(2) i. 15-22.

(3) ii. 14-39.

(4) iii. 1-26; iv. 1-4.

(5) iv. 5-22.

(6) v. 1-11.

(7) v. 15.

(8) v. 18-33.

(9) vi. 1-4.

(10) viii. 14-17.

(11) viii. 18-24.

(12) viii. 25.

(13) ix. 32-43. Is anything implied here as to Peter's habit of itinerating?

(14) x. 1-48.

(15) xi. 1-18.

(16) xii. 3-19.

(17) xv. 7-11. With this he disappears from the Book of Acts.

(11.) Subsequent references to him in the New Testament.

He is mentioned in I. Peter i. 5; II. Peter i. 1; Gal. i. 18; ii. 11-21; I. Cor. i. 12; iii. 22; ix. 5. Enrich your account of his life with whatever you can gain from these sources.

(III.) His life after the Book of Acts leaves him.

Almost everything is traditional, and the traditions are not well founded. We are told that from 35-40 he was Bishop of Antioch, that he went to Rome in 40 and was bishop there for twenty-five years, leaving occasionally for missionary journeys. During the Neronian persecutions he is said to have yielded to the prayer of the Christians and to have gone out to escape from Rome, but as he was departing from the Porta Capena a little way, he met the Lord carrying His cross and said to him, "Lord, whither goest thou?" "I go to Rome," said Jesus, "to be crucified again for thee." Peter turned back and was imprisoned in the Tullianum, converted the jailer, baptising him from a miraculously provided spring. He was executed the same day as Saint Paul, crucified on the top of the Janiculum, parting from Paul on the Ostian road. By his own request he was crucified head downward, because, Jerome says, "he asserted he was unworthy to be crucified in the same manner as his Lord."

Regarding all this it is to be said :

(1) The notion that Peter was Bishop of Antioch from 33-40 is inconsistent with clear statements in the Acts, by which Paul and Barnabas are shown to us as the leaders and virtual founders of the Church at Antioch.

(2) If Peter had ever been at Rome before 64 it is inconceivable that neither in the Book of Acts nor in any Epistles do we find any reference to it.

Can we infer from I. Peter v. 13 that Peter had preached in Babylon? Some think the term symbolical, but it is doubtless the real Babylon to which he refers. It has been noted that the provinces named in I. Peter i. are named in proper geographical order from east to west, as though he began with those nearest to him and lifted his eyes and his heart to the provinces, in their order, which lay beyond.

(iv.) Peter was probably married. I. Cor. ix. 5 implies it, and Clemens of Alexandria says, "Peter and Philip had children, and both took about their wives, who acted as their coadjutors in ministering to women at their own homes."

(v.) The student is familiar with the connection between Peter and Mark.

(1) Papias, who was a direct hearer of John, says, "This, also, the

elder used to say, Mark having become Peter's interpreter wrote accurately all that he remembered (or that Peter mentioned), though he did not (record) in order that which was said or done by Christ."

(2) The connection between Mark's Gospel and Peter is very interesting.

(a) Peter is mentioned by Mark where his name is omitted by the other Evangelists. Mark i. 36; ix. 21; xiii. 3; xvi. 7.

(b) Peter's name is omitted by Mark where it is mentioned by the other Evangelists.

Compare

Mark vii. 17 : Matt. xv. 15.

Mark vi. 50, 51 : Matt. xiv. 28-31.

Mark ix. 33 : Matt. xvii. 24-29.

Mark ii. 29, 30 : Matt. xvi. 17-19.

Mark xiv. 13 : Luke xxii. 8.

Luke xxii. 31, 32.

(c) Mark's Gospel contains some things humiliating to Peter. Mark viii. 33; xiv. 72. He does not say that Peter "wept bitterly," as in Matt. xxvi. 75, and he shows the greatness of Peter's offence, in that he represents the cock as crowing twice. Moreover, he

gives to Mary Magdalene the honor of being the first to see Jesus after His Resurrection. Mark xvi. 9.

(VI.) Of Peter's end we do not clearly know, but it is probable that he was crucified. Tradition relates it. The prophecy of Jesus in John xxi. 18 may be understood to indicate it, and Peter evidently construed it as a prophecy of his death. II. Peter i. 14.

(VII.) Some special points.

(1) His prominence among the Apostles.

(a) He is spokesman of the Twelve. i. 15; ii. 14; iv. 8; v. 29.

(b) In ii. 37, x. 29, his name alone of the Apostles is mentioned.

(c) He possessed no special authority, however.

The other Apostles sent him to Samaria. viii. 14-17. The church at Jerusalem indignantly calls him to account for having baptized and eaten with Cornelius and his family. xi. 1-17. At the Jerusalem council he did not preside, and he neither called nor dismissed the council. His

advice was not based on any personal or official authority, but only on undoubted facts. xv. 7,

(*d*) Testimony of Paul. Gal. ii. 9, 11-13.

(2) When was he at Rome?

The traditions are profuse and discordant. The statement that he came to Rome in the reign of Claudius in 42 is first found in Eusebius three centuries afterwards, and cannot be reconciled with Paul's letters and the Acts.

(*a*) xii. 17. We know Peter left Jerusalem for a time after the death of James, but this was 44 A.D., and he was at Jerusalem at the council in 50.

(*b*) Peter was not at Rome in 59 when Paul wrote to the Romans, for no salutations were sent to him. He was not there when Paul came as prisoner, or Luke would certainly have mentioned it. He was not there 61-63, for no salutations are sent from him to those to whom the four letters written then by Paul were sent. He was not there in 66, 67, when Paul wrote his last Epistles.

(*c*) If he was ever there, and such unanimity of tradition ap-

pears to indicate that he was, it must have been at the close of his life, for a short while only.

(3) His relation to Paul. There is no intimation of any opposition in the Acts. From Gal. ii. 11-21, it is plain there was dissension at Antioch. From Acts xv. 7-11, it is evident, however, that Peter saw clearly, and agreed with Paul.

(VIII.) His personal appearance.

It has been surmised that he was "a man of much larger and stronger form than Paul's, as his character was harsher and more abrupt. The quick impulses of his soul betrayed themselves in the flashes of a dark eye. The complexion of his face was pale and sallow, and the short hair, which was described as entirely grey at the time of his death, curled black and thick around his temples and his chin, when he stood at Antioch with Paul twenty years before his martyrdom."

b. The speeches of Peter.

(1.) His three missionary sermons.

ii. 14-40; iii. 12-26; x. 26-48. Note the occasion, the quotations from the Old Testament, the line of thought, his adaptation to the prejudices of the hearers, his appeal to his own personal knowledge, and his coura-

geous personal application of the truth. Analyze these sermons, and notice how each one of them leads up to Christ.

(II.) Shorter speeches before the Sanhedrim.

iv. 8-12, 19, 20; v. 29-32. Notice the boldness of the preacher, his carelessness of personal harm, his neglect of shame, his loyalty in preaching Christ, and the results.

(III.) Utterances within the Church.

(1) Prayers. i. 24, 25; iv. 24-30. Did Peter's voice offer these prayers?

(2) Brief addresses. i. 16-22; v. 3-9; vi. 2-4; vii. 20-23; xi. 4-18; xv. 7-17. What was the occasion of each of these addresses, and what elements of Peter's character did they display?

c. The teaching of these speeches.

(I.) About God.

(1) His attributes.

Omniscient. i. 24.

Truthful. v. 4.

Jealous. iv. 19.

Forgiving. viii. 22.

(2) His relations.

(a) To men.

Revealed Himself to them by the prophets. Acts ii. 17; iii. 18, 21.

Supreme in His claims. iv.

19.

Impartial. x. 34.

(b) To Christ.

He approved Him. ii. 22.

Anointed Him. x. 38.

Raised Him from the dead.

ii. 30, 32; v. 30; x. 40.

He exalted Him. ii. 36;

v. 31; iii. 13.

Note also iii. 20; x. 42.

(c) To the Jews. ii. 13, 25.

(d) To nature. iv. 24.

(e) To His Church. v. 4; v. 32; xi. 17.

(f) To the Apostles. i. 24; x. 40, 41.

(g) To the Holy Spirit. xv. 8.

(h) And to events. ii. 23; iv. 27, 28; x. 41; xv. 7.

(II.) About Christ.

(1) His person.

(a) True son of God. ii. 36; iii. 13, 15; iv. 27.

(b) True Son of Man. i. 21; ii. 22; iii. 22; iv. 27; x. 41

(2) His work.

(a) What was He as to His work? ii. 36; iii. 22; iv. 27.

(b) What He was to do. iii. 26; v. 31; ix. 34; x. 38.]

(3) His death.

(a) Crucified. ii. 23, 36 iii. 10; v. 30; x. 39.

(b) Light in which His death was regarded.

(c) Some steps in His work.

(1) Pre-determined by God. ii. 23; iv. 27, 28.

(2) None the less, those who slew him were guilty. ii. 23; iii. 13-15.

(3) As suffering to Him. iii. 18.

(4) His Resurrection.

i. 22; ii. 24; iii. 15; iv. 10; v. 30; x. 40.

(5) His exaltation.

i. 22; ii. 33; iii. 13; iv. 11; v. 31; x. 36.

(6) His second coming.

iii. 19-21; x. 42.

(III.) About the Holy Ghost.

(1) How did He come? ii. 33; v. 32; x. 38.

(2) What does He do?

(a) Fills the Church. v. 3.

(b) Witnesses. v. 32.

(c) Qualifies for service. vi. 3; x. 38.

(d) Directs. xi. 12.

(3) How may I obtain Him?

(a) A gift. xv. 8.

(b) Conditions. ii. 38; v. 32.

(IV.) About the Apostles.

(1) Any order among them? xii.

17.

(2) Qualifications. i. 21, 22.

(V.) About salvation.

(1) How secured to men? ii. 36;
iv. 12; xv. 11.

(2) For whom secured? ii. 21, 39;
v. 31; x. 35, 43.

(3) Upon what conditions obtained?

(a) Repentance. ii. 38; iii. 19;
v. 31; viii. 22.

(b) Change. iii. 19; viii. 22, 23.

(c) Faith. iii. 16; x. 43; xi. 17;
xv. 7, 9.

In what? xi. 14. Study the
use of "Name." ii. 21, 38; iii.
6, 16; iv. 10, 12, 30; x. 43.

(VI.) About the means of grace.

(1) Baptism. ii. 38; x. 47; xi. 16.

(2) The word. i. 16; iii. 18; iv. 25.

(3) Preaching.

(a) Of the word. vi. 2, 4; xv. 7.

(b) Of the Resurrection.
Preaching was a witnessing to

this. i. 22; ii. 32; iii. 15; iv. 13, 20; v. 32; x. 39, 42.

(c) Of Christ. iii. 20.

(d) Of peace. x. 36.

(VII.) About sin. v. 1-12; viii. 23. But it can be removed. ii. 38; iii. 19; v. 31.

(VIII.) About prophecy. Study Peter's quotations from the Old Testament. Observe the following and add to this list: i. 16-20; ii. 17-21, 25-28, 30, 34, 35; iii. 18, 21-24; iv. 11, 25, 26.

d. His character.

(I) Boldness. iv. 13.

(II.) Leadership. ii. 14.

(III.) Faith. iii. 1-11.

(IV.) Self-will. x. 13, 14.

(V.) Teachableness. iv. 13.

(VI.) A man of prayer. iv. 24-30; viii. 15; ix. 40.

(VII.) Obedience. x.

(VIII.) Generosity. xv. 7-11.

(IX.) Forgiving. Compare what you learn from Acts with Gal. ii. 11; II. Peter iii. 15. In their lives these two were friends, and in their deaths they were not divided. See Stanley's *Sermons and Essays on the Apostolical Age*.

2. *Barnabas.*

The key to his character is found in xi. 24.

a. First mentioned in iv. 36.

(I.) His name. Not Barsabas, i. 23, but Barnabas, literally "son of exhortation." xi. 23.

(II.) His tribe. He was a Levite, yet he owned land. How do you account for this?

(III.) His country?

(IV.) His generosity?

(V.) Did his act have any influence in Cyprus? Might it not have commended the Gospel to some of his old neighbors? Acts. xi. 12-20.

b. Second mention of his name in Acts ix. 27.

c. Barnabas at Antioch. xi. 22. Contrast his attitude toward the Gentiles with Peter's. xi. 25, 26; xi. 27, 30; xii. 12. Were Barnabas and Saul in this prayer meeting? xii. 25; xiii. 1. This last reference names Barnabas first and Saul last. Study each one of the events indicated in these passages in detail. Where else in the Bible does the word "Christian" occur?

d. The missionary journey. Acts xiii., xiv. Trace their course on the map. Notice where the name Saul changes to Paul. Where does Mark leave them? Where does the order Barnabas and Saul give place to Paul and Barnabas? Why is the order Barnabas and

Paul used in Acts xv. 12, 25? What does the mistaking of Barnabas for Jupiter and of Paul for Mercury imply as to their personal appearance?

e. The council at Jerusalem. xiv. 28; xv. 1-31. What was the result? Who were sent back to Antioch? How did the Antioch Christians regard the message from Jerusalem?

f. Paul and Barnabas separate. Acts xv. 35-41. What was the result of the quarrel as to the amount of missionary work done? What was the cause of it? Who was right? Had Gal. ii. 13 anything to do with the dissension? Did Paul and Barnabas ever meet again? The quarrel is a commentary on Acts xiv. 15, and James v. 17. The Greek word for contention indicates a brief, violent altercation not lasting long. At any rate Paul kept a high opinion of Barnabas. In Col. iv. 10 he commends Mark because of his relationship to Barnabas, and in the end he accepts Barnabas's view of Mark. II. Tim. iv. 11; Philemon 24. In I. Cor. ix. 6 he makes honorable mention of Barnabas, and one can imagine that he pointed out Cyprus to Luke and Aristarchus on his way to Rome (xxi. 3), and told them lovingly of the good man who had been as a father to him as he began his service of Christ.

g. Traditions.

Eusebius and Clemens Alexandrinus say that Barnabas was one of the seventy. Luke x. 1. Some say that he became

Bishop of Milan; others, that he preached in Rome and converted Clemens; still others, that he died a martyr in Cyprus.

h. His character.

(I.) He counted the interests of his cause greater than his personal interests. iv. 36.

(II.) He had a good judgment of men rather than of issues. He was like Andrew somewhat. Andrew brought Peter to Jesus; Barnabas brought Paul and Mark into larger service.

(III.) He was of slow and gentle temper and yielded the first place to Paul without a murmur of dissent. Perhaps it was this assumption of the first place by Paul which was the cause of Mark's leaving them.

(IV.) He was calm, sympathetic, and conservative, rather than enthusiastic and progressive. Thus, he would have compromised at Antioch under the influence of Peter's dissimulation. He stood firm, however, at Jerusalem. And he was liberally broad minded.

(V.) He was a good man. There is more in being *good* than most college men think.

(VI.) Full of faith. He had faith in the goodness that there was in man and he had

faith in God, so great that he gave all his means of support away for His service.

(VII.) And the Holy Ghost filled him.
Acts ii. 24.

The epitaph of "Chinese" Gordon might have been written over Barnabas, changing the name: "Here lies the body of Gen. Chas. Gordon, who everywhere and at all times gave his strength to the weak, his substance to the poor, his sympathy to the suffering, and his heart to God."

3. *Stephen.*

He was one of the formative characters of the early church. He was a deacon, but he shot far ahead of his fellow deacons and of his office too.

a. vi. 3.

b. His work. vi. 7-10. With what synagogues did he dispute?

c. The accusation. vi. 11-13. Where was the trial? Was the accusation true?

d. Stephen's appearance. vi. 15.

e. The trial. It was before the Pharisaic party, for they were now in the majority. v. 34; vii. 51. Compare vii. 1 with Mark xiv. 60-63.

f. Stephen's defence.

Notice its consummate tact, its resemblance to Hebrews xi.

Two latent principles seem to have governed his selection of facts.

(I.) Even in previous Jewish history the presence and favor of God had not been confined to the Holy Land or to the temple at Jerusalem. vii. 2, 4, 5, 6, 8-13; 20-22, 29, 30-33, 36, 44, 45, 47-50. Compare John iv. 21-24.

(II.) From the earliest times there was a tendency toward the narrow and ungrateful spirit now characterizing the Jews, as seen in their jealousy and rebellion against their benefactors. vii. 9, 27, 39, 40, 42, 43. All this was aggravated by God's goodness and grace to them all the while. vii. 5, 10, 11, 25, 34, 45.

This is the same charge which Jesus made. Matt. xxiii. 29-35.

It has been alleged that the speech contains the following variations from the Mosaic history. The careful student will probably be able to satisfy himself about them all.

(I.) Call of Abraham. vii. 2. : Gen. xii. 1.

(II.) Death of Abraham's father. xii. 4 : Gen. xi. 32.

(III.) The number of Jacob's company. vii. 14 : Gen. xlvi. 27.

(IV.) Description of Moses. vii. 20 : Ex. ii. 2.

(V.) Early training of Moses. vii. 22 : Ex. iv. 10.

(vi.) His secular greatness. vii. 22: Ex. ii. 10.

(vii.) Chronology. Stephen gives three periods of forty years. vii. 23, 30, 36: Ex. xvi. 45.

(viii.) Terror of Moses at the bush. vii. 32. Ex. iii. 3.

(ix.) Intervention of the angels in the giving of the law. vii. 53: Ex. xix. 16.

(x.) Burial of the Patriarchs at Shechem. vii. 16: Ex. i. 6; Josh. xxiv. 32.

(xi.) Purchase of tombs. vii. 16; Gen. xxiii. 15.

g. His condemnation.

He suddenly breaks off his calm address. His purpose has been fulfilled. He knows their hearts. vii. 51, 53. What was the effect on them? What visions does he have? vii. 55, 56. He sees Jesus standing. [Elsewhere in the new Testament He is represented as sitting. Col. iii. 1; Heb. i. 3; x. 12; Rev. iii. 21.] Chrysostom says He was standing as though He had risen to receive Stephen. Stephen calls Him the "Son of Man." This is the only place in the New Testament where the title is applied to Jesus except by Himself, save Rev. xiv. 14.

h. His martyrdom.

vii. 57, 58. They had nearly stoned Jesus once. John viii. 59. Those must take the lead who had assumed the re

sponsibility of denouncing Stephen. Compare John viii. 7; Deut. xvii. 7. One of the prominent leaders of the transaction was deputed by custom to signify his consent by taking the clothes of those who did the deed into his custody. Saul of Tarsus performed this office. xxii. 20. Had he met Stephen in the synagogue of the Cilicians? vi. 9.

One volley of stones brought from Stephen the prayer, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Compare Phil. i. 23; Psa. xxxi. 5; Luke xxiii. 46. A second volley brings him to his knees with a loud dying shout, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Matt. v. 44; Luke xxiii. 34. And he fell asleep.

The early Christians were made of heroic stuff. Polycarp, as he stood on the funeral pile, April 6, 166, prayed, "Lord, God Almighty, Father of Thy beloved and blessed Son, Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the knowledge of Thee, the God of angels and powers, and of the whole creation, and of all the race of the righteous who live before Thee, I bless Thee that Thou hast counted me worthy of this day and this hour, that I should have a part in the number of Thy witnesses, in the cup of Thy Christ." And it is related of Pionius, a martyr in Smyrna, that he was heard supplicating from the flames of the pyre for the Emperor, for his

judges, and for all the heathen. When an audible "Amen" was on his lips, the flames smote together above him and ended his life.

z. His burial.

viii. 2. These were Jews, not Christians. The death of the martyr must have been the conviction of many a beholder. Tradition makes the date of his martyrdom December 26 of the same year as the crucifixion; and so Augustine says, putting the days together, that men would not have had the courage to die for God if God had not become man to die for them.

j. His character and place.

(I.) He was the first great Christian ecclesiastic. He is not called a "deacon" in the Bible. Do deacons now measure up to Stephen?

(II.) He was the forerunner of Paul. Basil of Seleucia calls him Παύλου ὁ διδάσκαλος.

(1) The influence of his martyrdom on Paul. The blood of the first martyr was the seed of the greatest Apostle. Augustine says, "The Church owes Paul to the prayer of Stephen."

"Si Stephanus non orasset
Ecclesia Paulum non haberet."

Compare xxii. 4; xxvi. 10;
Phil. iii. 6; I. Tim. i. 13.

There is a picture by Vicent Joannes, founder of the Valencian school, of "Stephen conducted to the place of execution, representing Saul as walking by his side with melancholy calmness. He consents to Stephen's death from a sincere, though mistaken, conviction of duty, and the expression of his countenance is strongly contrasted with the rage of the baffled Jewish doctors; and the ferocity of the crowd." Literally the conception is untrue, considering Paul's immediate conduct and his words, spoken later, about himself at this time. Poetically the conception is true, throwing on the persecutor's face the shadow of his coming repentance.

(2) Stephen anticipated the Pauline view of Christianity. Broader than any subordination to local worship, he saw the spiritual side of Jewish history and treated it as Paul did. He used the historical method, as Paul did at Antioch in Pisidia.

Compare—

vii. 48, 51 : xvii. 24 ; Rom. ii. 29.

vii. 53 : Gal. iii. 19.

vii. 2 ; xxii. 1.

vii. 5-8 : Rom. iv. 10-19.

vii. 2-4 : Gal. iii. 7 ; Rom. iv. 9.

(III.) He was a Bible student. His whole sermon is from the Old Testament.

(IV.) He was the first Christian martyr. The word "martyr" is first applied to him by Paul. xxii. 20. Read Heber's hymn, "The Son of God goes forth to war," and John Keble's "St. Stephen's Day," in *The Christian Year*.

4. *Apollos*.

a. xviii. 24-27.

(I.) Name, nation, and city.

(II.) Character. Eloquent, mighty in the Scripture, fervent in spirit, diligent, bold, teachable, missionary.

(III.) He knew only John's baptism. Did he know of Christ at all, or did he know all but the coming of the Holy Spirit?

b. He went to Corinth.

xviii. 27, 28; xix. 1. Apollos remained at Corinth some time, thoroughly confuting the Jews and watering where Paul had planted. I. Cor. iii. 6. His presence, however, led to some division. He must have been a winning man, for a sect took his name. Probably he presented a more intellectual and gnostic type of Christianity than Paul's. This did not interfere with the cordial relations existing between Apollos and Paul, for they were together

when Paul wrote I. Corinthians, and Paul urged him to go back to Corinth. I. Cor. xvi. 12. Apollos refused to go, however, perhaps disgusted by the dissensions. It may even have been through Apollos that Paul learned about these divisions.

c. The only other reference to him is in Titus iii. 13.

d. Study these brief references carefully. Apollos is one of the most interesting figures in these most interesting times.

5. *Aquila and Priscilla.*

a. We meet them first at Corinth. Acts xviii, 1-3.

(1.) Who were they? Jews from Pontus, evidently, living at Rome. There were at least 8,000 Jews there. Jews were numerous in Pontus, too. Acts ii. 9; I. Peter i. 1.

(II.) When did they become Christians?

(1) Before meeting Paul?

(*a*) Their subsequent conversion and baptism are not referred to.

(*b*) Paul joined himself to them.

(II.) After meeting Paul?

They are called "Jews," not "disciples," as they would probably have been called were they Christians. Paul joined them because of their trade.

(III.) Why did they leave Rome at the order of Claudius?

Suetonius says, "Judaeos impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantes Roma expulit." Was Chrestus some ringleader, or a misreading of "Christus," and was it a persecution of Christians which led to the expulsion, the Romans making no distinction between the Christian Jews and the others?

(IV.) What was their business?

(v.) They and Paul lived together all the week working (xx. 34; I. Cor. iv. 11), and he preached in the synagogue on the Sabbath.

b. They leave Corinth with Paul, and we meet them next at Ephesus. xviii. 18. The order of names is reversed now. From Ephesus Paul writes I. Corinthians, and they are there with him then. How do you know? How long they stayed we do not know. They were there when Apollos came. xviii. 26. Which of the two taught Apollos? There is a monograph of the date 1709 entitled, "De Priscilla, Aquilae uxore, tamquam feminarum e gente Judaica eruditarum specimine."

After Apollos went to Corinth and Paul returned to Ephesus they were there. I. Cor. xvi. 19. Perhaps they employed a large number of workmen who constituted this Church.

c. They leave Ephesus soon and go back to Rome, for Paul salutes them in Romans xvi. 3-5.

(I.) The reign of Claudius ended in 54. Romans was written in 59. The business of Aquila and Priscilla was a movable one, and this leaves abundance of time for them to go back to Rome.

(II.) They have evidently been of some special help to Paul.

(1) He calls them his helpers in the Lord.

(2) They had risked their lives for him. When was this — xviii. 12 or xix. 30, 31?

(3) It was known to the Gentile Christians, and they, too, thanked Aquila and Priscilla for it.

(III.) They again have a church in their house. Compare I. Cor. xvi. 19; Col. iv. 15; Philemon 2. As late as the middle of the second century there was no fixed place of general assembly at Rome, but there were several churches in houses. Compare Acts xii. 12.

d. They have gone back to Ephesus again in the year of Paul's martyrdom, when he writes to Timothy. II. Tim. iv. 19.

(1.) Prisca is the same name as Priscilla. The wife is placed first again, as in xviii. 18; Rom. xvi. 3. Compare xviii. 2,

26; I. Cor. xvi. 19. Was she the more energetic character of the two? She must have been a great help to young Timothy in his work as the Bishop of Ephesus, in helping him carry out Paul's advice about the women.

(II.) Tradition relates that they were beheaded.

6. *James.*

a. James, the brother of John. i. 13; xii. 1, 2.

b. James, the son of Alphæus. i. 13.

c. James, the Just. What relation was he to Christ? xii. 17. xv. 13-21. Notice the dignity, generosity, scripturalness, and acceptableness of his speech. xxi. 18-25.

7. *The other Apostles.*

a. John. i. 13; iii. 1-11; iv. 13, 19; viii. 14; xii. 2.

b. i. 13.

c. Judas. i. 16-20, 25; iv. 23.

d. Matthias. i. 23. Is he recognized afterwards as an Apostle? ii. 14; v. 18, 29; vi. 2.

8. *Philip.*

He was one of the deacons, not the Apostle Philip, or it would not have been necessary to send Peter and John to Samaria to look after things.

a. vi. 5. He is next to Stephen in the list of deacons. Are they arranged in order of prominence, or in the order in which they received votes? Stephen and Philip are the only two we hear from again, unless Rev. ii. 6 contains a reference to Nicolas.

b. vi. 3. He doubtless met these conditions.

c. viii. 1-4. The persecution which arose upon the death of Stephen would probably fall heavily upon Philip, who had been associated with him; so he went to Samaria. It must have been a joy to him to have a chance of spreading the Gospel among the Samaritans. What was their religious position?

d. viii. 5-8. He preached Christ to them. What was the result?

e. viii. 19, 13. Even Simon the Sorcerer was touched.

f. What was the substance of Philip's preaching? viii. 5, 12. It was attested by signs. viii. 13.

g. His meeting with the Eunuch. viii. 26-39. The Eunuch was probably a proselyte of the gate.

He had been to Jerusalem to do his duty there, and, returning, was reading aloud, according to the rules of the Rabbis and from his own desire for knowledge. Study this passage carefully, observing the parties, the meeting, the introduction, the passage of Scripture, the question, the con-

versation, the conversion, the baptism, the parting, the result.

viii. 40. Philip immediately went to Azotus, and from there to Cæsarea. It may have been there that he told Luke about this scene.

h. We lose sight of him now. Probably he remained at Cæsarea, or made it a center from which he went out on his missionary journeys; for in xxi. 8 we find him there.

(I.) This must have been a good meeting. Paul and Philip had the same sympathies. Doubtless they talked much together about Stephen. Had they met in Cæsarea before, when young Saul was sent from Jerusalem to Tarsus to escape the Grecians? ix. 29, 30.

(II.) Philip is called the "Evangelist." To whom else in the New Testament is that title applied? II. Tim. iv. 5; Eph. iv. 11.

(III.) He had four consecrated daughters. Compare ii. 17.

(IV.) The importance of Philip's position here where he would reach the men of all nations. Cæsarea was the port of Jerusalem.

9. *Some missionary helpers.*

a. John Mark.

xii. 12, 25; xiii. 4, 5, 13. xv. 37-39.

b. Timothy.

(I.) Paul meets him at Lystra and likes him. xvi. 1-3.

(II.) He forthwith accompanies Paul until he is left temporarily at Berea (xvii. 14), but he joins him soon at Athens (xvii. 15).

(III.) He is sent to Macedonia on some errand, and returns to Corinth. xviii. 5.

(IV.) We lose sight of him now, but presently he is sent from Ephesus into Macedonia. xix. 22.

(V.) And he was one of the company of friends who went before Paul when he left Achaia finally, and tarried for him at Troas. xx. 4, 5.

c. Silas.

(I.) First appearance. xv. 22.

(II.) Silas liked Paul and Antioch. xv. 32-34. Verse 34 is omitted from the Revised Version. The teaching regarding Silas's attachment to Paul, however, is just the same. xv. 40. If Silas went away, he must have returned.

(III.) He accompanied Paul on his second missionary journey. xvi. 19-40.

(IV.) At Thessalonica. xvii. 4, 10.

(V.) Left at Berea. xvii. 14.

(vi.) Received a command to join Paul. xvii. 15.

(vii.) He was with Paul at Corinth. xviii. 5; I. Thess. i. 1; II. Thess. i. 1; II. Cor. i. 19.

(viii.) He is not mentioned again in the Acts or by Paul. Probably he returned to Jerusalem and worked there, as he had done before meeting Paul. Timothy took his place with the great missionary. Silas had been deeply esteemed by Paul. The order is always Silas and Timothy, never Timothy and Silas. He was a man of broad views, deep devotion, and lowly spirit.

(ix.) He carries the first Epistle of Peter. I. Peter v. 12. Peter esteemed him as highly as Paul did. And he was known to these Asiatic churches. We see him last, as we saw him first, laboring for the spread of the Gospel.

10. *What civil or political officials are mentioned?*

viii. 27-39; x. 1; xii. 1-22; xiii. 7; xvi. 20, 23, 35; xvii. 8; xviii. 2, 12; xix. 31, 35; xxi. 31, 32; xxii. 25; xxiii. 23, 26; xxiv. 27; xxv. 11, 13, 21; xxvii. 1; xxviii. 16. •

11. *Minor characters.*

i. 23; iv. 6; v. 34, 36, 37; viii. 9-24; ix. 10-17, 33-35, 36-41, 43; xi. 28; xii. 12, 13; xiii. 6-11; xiv. 13; xv. 22; xvi. 1, 14, 30; xvii. 34; xviii. 8,

17; xix. 9, 14, 24, 29, 33; xx. 9; xxi. 16, 29; xxiv. 1, 24; xxv. 13; xxviii. 7.

Study the four Herods.

a. Herod the Great, the founder of the family, who murdered the innocents of Bethlehem. Died B.C. 4.

b. Herod Antipas, his son. B.C. 4 to A.D. 39. He murdered John the Baptist.

c. Herod Agrippa the first, grandson of Herod the Great. A.D. 37-44. He murdered James.

d. Herod Agrippa the second, great grandson of Herod the Great. A.D. 50-100. Before him Paul appeared. xxvi. 28.

12. *Paul.*

Next to Christ, he is perhaps the most important figure in history, both because of his work and because of his character, though the former has overshadowed the latter too much. His life was extraordinarily broad. The study of it here must be limited to what can be learned from the Acts.

a. His life.

(1.) Before his conversion. 1-36 A.D.

• (1) We first meet him at Stephen's martyrdom. vii. 58; viii. 1, 3.

(2) He was a native of Tarsus. xxii. 3.

(3) And was of the tribe of Benjamin. Phil. iii. 5.

(4) Inherited from his father the rights of Roman citizenship. xxii. 27, 28.

(5) He learned a trade in Tarsus. xviii. 3. This was a wholesome Jewish custom, and did not imply that the family was in needy condition, or that Paul was not also receiving an education in higher things. Tarsus was a rival of Athens and Alexandria as a place of learning and research. Perhaps he gained here his unfailing urbanity, his skill in using Greek, his acquaintance with heathen literature. xvii. 28; xxvi. 1-2.

(6) He removed at an early age to Jerusalem and was educated there. xxii. 3.

(7) He was in deadly earnest in his support of Judaism. xxii. 3-5. Was he a member of the Sanhedrim? In xxvi. 10 he speaks of his vote. See the Greek.

(11.) His conversion. 36 A.D.

It was on the errand mentioned in xxii. 3-5 that God changed the current of his life. The persecutor was to become the propagator. There are three accounts of his conversion. ix. 1-18; xxii. 5-16; xxvi. 12-23.

(1) The place.

(2) The light. ix. 3; xxii. 6; xxvi. 13.

(4) His position and that of his companions. ix. 4; xxii. 7; xxvi. 14.

(4) What was said? ix. 4; xxii. 7, 8, 10; xxvi. 14.

(5) Who heard what was said and saw the light? ix. 7; xxii. 9. These are reconcilable.

(6) What followed? ix. 8-18; xxii. 11-16.

(7) What did Paul see when he was stricken down? ix. 17; xxii. 14; I. Cor. xv. 8.

(III.) At Damascus and Jerusalem. 36-38 A.D.

(1) At Damascus he broke his three days' fast (ix. 9), and was baptised (xxii. 16).

(2) ix. 20-25.

(a) How long was Paul in Damascus?

a. Gal. i. 18. These three years probably dated from his conversion. Did he spend them all in Damascus? No.

The Jews would not have tolerated him so long.

The Christians at Jerusalem would not have been

afraid of him if he had been so long tried at Damascus.

b. Where else did he go?
Gal. i. 17.

(b) Why did he flee? ix. 23;
II. Cor. xi. 32.

(3) From Damascus he goes to Jerusalem. ix. 22, 26-30. On what grounds did Barnabas vouch for him?

(4) ix. 30.

(iv.) At Antioch. 44, 45 A.D.

Where was he from 38-43? Gal. i. 21.

(1) xi. 20-24.

(2) xi. 25, 26.

(3) xi. 28-30.

(4) xii. 25.

(5) xiii. 1, 2. They had trained native workers.

(v.) The first missionary journey. 45, 46 A.D.

The Church at Antioch was largely a Gentile Church. Hundreds of hearts must have been asking, "Is the Gospel to stop with us? It has pressed out of Judea and Samaria. Shall it not go, as He bade, to the uttermost parts of the earth?" And as they were serving, the Lord sent His answer.

(1) The choice of the missionaries.
xiii. 2. Notice that it was a separa-

tion by the Holy Ghost to a definite work, which must have been indefinite in a measure to them, and which yet in its essential character was specific, for instinctively they preached the word of God. The Holy Ghost called them not so much to a new kind as to a new field of work.

(2) The starting point. xiii. 1-4. Antioch was the missionary centre.

(3) The spirit of the departure. xiii. 3.

(4) The journey and its incidents. xiii. 1 - xiv. 28. Make an analysis of the journey, taking it up place by place, and study the events which happened in each place, writing the whole out carefully.

(5) What was their work ?

(a) Visited first of all the synagogue.

(b) Preaching the word at all opportunities.

(c) Ordained elders in every Church. xiv. 23.

(d) Commending them to the Lord,

a. As an object of faith.

b. With prayer and fasting

(6) Home once more.

(a) xiv. 26. They had been upheld by this consciousness and the assurance that the Christians at Antioch were praying for them.

(b) xiv. 27.

(7) xiv. 28. Here Paul remained from 46-51, with the exception of his visit to the council at Jerusalem.

(VI.) The Apostolic council. 50 A.D.

(1) The origin of the trouble. xv. 1, 2.

(2) The question at issue. Must the Gentile converts be circumcised?

(3) The mode of settlement. Compare Gal. ii.

(a) The delegates appointed. xv. 2.

(b) Their journey to Jerusalem. xv. 3.

(c) The council called. xv. 4-6.

(d) The proceedings.

a. Much disputing. xv. 7.

b. Peter's speech. xv. 7-

11.

c. Barnabas and Paul heard xv. 12.

d. James's speech. xv. 13-21.

e. The decision.

Legates. xv. 22.

Letters. xv. 23-29.

(e) The harmony of the proceedings. xv. 25, 26, 29.

(f) Luke's account in accordance with Paul's in Gal. ii. 1-10.

(4) Return home. xv. 30, 31.

(5) Paul and Barnabas remain in Antioch. xv. 35.

(6) Peter comes down and gets into trouble. He was fickle. Paul was firm. Gal. ii. 11-21.

(VII.) Second missionary journey. 51-54 A.D.

(1) His starting point,—Antioch, as usual. xv. 35, 40.

(2) The design conceived. xv. 36. Who proposed the journey?

(3) A dissension arose. xv. 37-39.

(4) Which results in a division. xv. 39, 40. Consider the good and the evil of this quarrel.

(5) The journey and its incidents.

Make a list of the places visited in order. Take these up one at a time, and study each by itself, and then in its relation to the others. The volume on Acts in

the *Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges* will be found helpful. xv. 41 - xviii. 22.

(VIII.) Third missionary journey. 54-58 A.D.

(1) Starting point. xviii. 23.

(2) From Antioch and Ephesus. xviii. 23 - xix. 1.

(3) Ministry in Ephesus. xix. 54-56 A.D. The first Epistle to the Corinthians was written now; perhaps also the Epistles to the Galatians.

(4) From Ephesus to Corinth. 57 A.D. xx. 1, 2; II. Cor. ii. 12. The Second Epistle to the Corinthians was written on this journey.

(5) Ministry in Achaia. xx. 3. The Epistle to the Romans was written now.

(6) From Corinth to Jerusalem. Study his route. Notice when Luke joins him, and what other companions he had. Study carefully his farewell speeches on this journey.

(7) His fifth and last visit to Jerusalem. xxi. 15, 16. When had he been there before?

(IX.) His first imprisonment. 58-62.

(1) Arrest at Jerusalem.

(a) Visit to James and the elders. xxi. 18, 19.

(*b*) Their advice to him. xxi. 20-25.

(*c*) He accepts it. With what result? xxi. 26-36.

(*d*) Paul asks an opportunity to speak to the people. xxi. 37-41. And does so in Hebrew. xxii. 1-21. When did they interrupt him?

(*e*) Paul kept in the castle. xxii. 22-29.

(*f*) Before the Jews again. xxii. 30 - xxiii. 10.

(*g*) His vision. xxiii. 11.

(*h*) Plot to kill Paul. xxiii. 12-22.

(2) Detention at Cæsarea.

(*a*) Sent there by Claudius Lysias. xxiii. 23-33.

(*b*) Governor Felix receives and keeps him. xxiii. 33-35.

(*c*) The hearing. xxiv. 1-22.

(*d*) Still a prisoner. xxiv. 23.

(*e*) The prisoner on exhibition. xxiv. 24-26.

(*f*) Change of governors. No change in Paul's condition. Why? xxiv. 27.

(*g*) Fresh charges. xxv. 1-3.

(*h*) Trial before Festus. xxv. 4-12. What led to the appeal to Cæsar? Why did not Paul

accept the change of venue proposed in xxv. 9.

(i) A visit. xxv. 13-22.

(j) On exhibition again. xxv. 23 - xxvi. 29. Paul loses no opportunity to preach Christ.

(k) To Rome. xxvi. 30-32.

(3) The voyage.

(a) The company. xxvii. 1, 2.

(b) The ship. xxvii. 2.

(c) The course. xxvii. 3-xxviii. 16. Study it step by step.

(4) Imprisonment in the city of the Cæsars.

(a) Not rigorous. xxiii. 16.

(b) His interviews with the chief Jews. xxviii. 17-29.

(c) The way he spent his time. xxviii. 30, 31. Epistles to the Philippians, Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians were written during his first imprisonment.

(x.) His later life. After two years' imprisonment Paul was tried and released, and continued his labors for the spread of Christianity.

(1) He first went eastward to Philippi and Ephesus. Phil. 1. 25, 27; Philemon 22; I. Tim. 1, 3; I. Tim. iii. 14; iv. 13. From this it is plain

that he was expecting to return to Ephesus. I. Timothy was written at this time. From Macedonia he evidently reached Ephesus and spent some time there. II. Tim. i. 18. Conybeare and Howson hold that Paul went to Spain in 64 (compare Romans xv. 28), and returned to Ephesus in 66.

(2) He paid a visit to Crete and left Titus there to organize churches. Titus i. 5; iii. 12.

(3) He traveled by Miletus (II. Tim. iv. 20), Troas (II. Tim. iv. 13), Corinth (II. Tim. iv. 20).

(4) We find him at last, once more at Rome in bonds as an evil doer, expecting death. II. Tim. ii. 9; iv. 6, 9-12, 16. He was all alone save for Luke, and desires Timothy to come quickly to him. His treatment now differed from his treatment during his preceding imprisonment.

(5) At the first hearing he vindicated his cause and was remanded to prison. II. Tim. iv. 16-17. It was now that the II. Epistle to Timothy was written. He was ready to go home (II. Tim. iv. 6-8), and he had not long to wait, for about the beginning of June 68 A.D. he was led out to die. He was a Roman citizen, and

so was beheaded, not crucified. What has been said of Charles Kingsley is but a part of what might be said of him, that he was —

“A righteous man
 Who loved God and truth above all things;
 A man of untarnished honor —
 Loyal and chivalrous — gentle and strong—
 Modest and humble — tender and true —
 Pitiful to the weak — yearning after the
 erring —
 Stern to all forms of wrong and oppression—
 Yet most stern towards himself—
 Who, being angry, yet sinned not.
 Who lived in the presence of God here,
 And, passing through the grave and gate of
 death,
 Now liveth unto God forevermore.”

Dying like the brave servant of God that he was, he still lives on, and “wheresoever the Holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge God, there Paul of Tarsus is revered as the great teacher of a universal redemption and a catholic religion, the herald of glad tidings to all mankind.”

b. Speeches.

(1.) To the Jews.

Always to them first.

(1) Discourses. xiii. 16-47; xxii. 1-21; xxviii. 17-20, 23-29.

(2) Brief notices of other addresses. ix. 20, 22; xiii. 9-11, 43; xv. 12; xxiii. 1-6. Notice the tact and skill of the

speaker, his adaptation to the prejudices of his hearers, the use he made of his materials, and his boldness and strength.

(II.) To the Gentiles. xiv. 15-17; xvi. 31; xvii. 16-31; xxiv. 10-21, 24; xxvi. 1-29. Notice the way he puts himself in their place, occupying their point of view. Observe his openheartedness, his skill in debate, his consciousness of right.

(III.) To the Church. xiv. 22-27; xv. 12; xx. 7-10, 18-35. Notice the substance of these speeches, their tenderness, timeliness, and discernment.

(IV.) In self defence.

(1) At Jerusalem.

(a) Before the people. xx. 1-21.

(b) Before the Sanhedrim. xxiii. 1-6.

(2) In Cæsarea. xxiv. 10-21, 24; xxvi. 1-29. Notice the circumstances of each speech, the way Paul presents the issue, allaying prejudice, until the time for the bold and necessary stroke.

c. The teaching of his speeches.

(I.) About God.

(1) His relation to nature and man. xiv. 15-17; xvii. 24-26, 27-30.

(2) He is the Actor in the spread of the Gospel. xiv. 17; xv. 12.

(3) His relation to Paul. xviii. 21 ;
xxii. 5-21 ; xxiii. 1.

(II.) About Jesus.

(1) His Davidic descent. xiii. 23.

(2) Who was He ?

(a) The Son of God. ix. 20.

(b) The Christ. ix. 22 ; xvii.
3 ; xviii. 5.

(c) Lord. xvi. 31 ; xx. 35 ; xxi.
13.

(d) Saviour. xiii. 23.

(3) His death on the cross. xiii.
27-29 ; xvii. 3 ; xxvi. 23.

(4) His Resurrection. xiii. 30, 31,
33-37 ; xvii. 3, 31 ; xxvi. 23.

(III.) About the Jews.

xiii. 17-22 ; xxii. 3 ; xxiii. 6 ; xxvi. 6,
7 ; xxviii. 20.

(IV.) The Gospel.

(1) What is it ? xiii. 32, 33.

(2) For whom is it ? xiii. 39, 47.

(3) Its source. xiii. 38, 39.

(4) Conditions.

(a) Faith. xiii. 39, 41 ; xvi. 31 ;
xxvi. 18.

(b) Repentance. xvi. 15 ; xvii.
30 ; xx. 21.

(5) Its essence. xiii. 26, 38, 39 ;
xiv. 15.

(v.) Some of Paul's doctrines.

(1) Sin. xiii. 10, 11, 38; xxii. 16; xxvi. 18.

(2) Sanctification. xx. 32.

(3) Consecration. xx. 24; xxi. 13.

(4) Giving. xx. 35.

(5) A coming judgment. xvii. 31.

(6) The resurrection of the dead. xxiii. 6; xxiv. 15, 21; xxiii. 8.

(7) Foreordination. xiii. 48.

(vi.) Paul's preaching.

(1) The substance of it.

(a) The word of God. xiii. 44, 49; xvi. 32; xvii. 11. What was Paul's attitude toward the Old Testament?

a. He believed it. xxiv. 14; xxvi. 22, 23; xxviii. 23. Compare Luke xxiv. 25.

b. He quoted it. What were the following quotations? xiii. 22, 33-35, 41; xxviii. 26, 27.

(b) Christ. ix. 20, 22; xvii. 3; xxviii. 5; xxviii. 31.

(c) Comfort. xiv. 22.

(d) The kingdom of God. xix. 8; xx. 25; xxviii. 23, 28.

(e) The Gospel. xx. 20, 21, 27.

(2) The spirit of it.

Boldly. ix. 29; xix. 8.

Confidently. xxviii. 31.

Unreservedly. xx. 27.

Sympathetically. xx. 31.

With personal testimony. xiii.
31; xxvi. 16.*d.* The Epistles of Paul.

In an exhaustive course those Epistles of Paul which were written during the period covered by Acts should be taken up here and studied in connection with the history. The following were written prior to the close of the Book :

(I.) The First Epistle to the Thessalonians, at Corinth in 52 or 53.

(II.) The Second Epistle to the Thessalonians at Corinth, not long after the First Epistle.

(III.) The First Epistle to the Corinthians, written at Ephesus toward the close of his long stay there.

(IV.) The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, written on his third missionary journey, somewhere in Macedonia.

(V.) The Epistle to the Galatians, written either in Ephesus 54-56, or in Achaia, or Macedonia in 57 or 58.

(VI.) The Epistle to the Romans, written at Corinth in the spring of 59.

(VII.) The Epistle to the Colossians, written at Rome during his first imprisonment.

(VIII.) The Epistle to Philemon, written at the same time and place.

(IX.) The Epistle to the Ephesians, written at the same time and place.

(X.) The Epistle to the Philippians, written at the same time and place.

NIX. THE TEACHING OF THE ACTS.

Review the teachings of the speeches of Peter and Paul, already considered.

1. *The Creed.*

Take each article of the Apostles' Creed, and find proof texts for it in the Book.

a. I believe. ii. 44; iv. 4; viii. 12, 13; ix. 42; x. 43; xi. 17, 21; xiii. 12, 39, 48; xiv. 1, 23; xv. 5, 7, 11; xvi. 31, 34. Add at least one from each other chapter if possible.

b. In God, the Father almighty, maker of Heaven and earth. iv. 24; xiv. 15-17; xvii. 24, 25.

c. And in Jesus Christ. ii. 36; iii. 20; x. 36; xvii. 3; xviii. 5, 28.

d. His only Son. iii. 13; ix. 20; xiii. 33.

e. Our Lord. i. 21; ii. 36; iv. 33; vii. 59; viii. 16; ix. 5, 17, 29; x. 36, 48; xi. 20; xix. 5, 10, 13, 17; xx. 24, 35; xxi. 13. Where are the expressions, "The Lord Jesus Christ," "Our Lord Jesus Christ," used?

f. Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary. i. 14.

g. Suffered under Pontius Pilate. ii. 13, 23; iv. 27; xiii. 28.

h. Was crucified. ii. 23, 36; iii. 15; iv. 10; v. 30; vii. 52; x. 39; xiii. 28, 29.

i. Dead and buried. ii. 24; xiii. 29.

j. He descended into Hell. ii. 31; xiii. 34.

k. The third day He rose again from the dead. i. 22; ii. 24; ii. 32; iii. 15; iv. 10; v. 31; xiii. 30; xvii. 3, 31; xxvi. 23. Find the single verse which asserts that it was the third day.

l. He ascended into Heaven. i. 11, 22.

m. And sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. ii. 25, 33; v. 31; vii. 55, 56.

n. From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. i. 11; iii. 20, 21; x. 42; xvii. 31.

o. I believe in the Holy Ghost.

(I.) Promises. i. 4, 5; ii. 16-18.

(II.) The promises fulfilled. ii. 1-4.
And subsequently —

(1) At Jerusalem. iv. 31.

(2) In Samaria. viii. 15-17.

(3) In Cæsarea. x. 44, 45.

(III.) His work.

(1) In relation to Jesus. i. 2; ii. 33; x. 38.

(2) In relation to the Old Testament Scriptures. i. 16; xxviii. 25.

(3) In relation to the Church.

(*a*) Empowered. i. 8; iv. 33.

(*b*) Emboldened. iv. 13.

(*c*) Comforted. ix. 31.

(*d*) Witnessed with their testimony. v. 32; vii. 51.

(*e*) Guided.

a. Positively. viii. 29, 39;
x. 19; xi. 12; xiii. 2, 4; xv.
28; xx. 28.

b. Negatively. xvi. 6, 7.

(f) Filled. vi. 3, 5; xiii. 9.
This fullness always manifested
itself. ii. 2; iv. 8, 13; vii. 55;
ix. 17, 18; xi. 24; xiii. 52.

(g) In a sense, the Holy Ghost
was identified with the Church.
v. 3; xv. 28; xx. 28.

(h) At any rate, He gave the
power of tongues and of proph-
ecy. ii. 4; x. 46; xi. 28; xix. 6;
xx. 23; xxi. 11.

(iv.) How to get the Holy Ghost.

(1) A gift. ii. 38; x. 45; xv. 8.

(2) Cannot be bought. viii. 18-24.

(3) Conditions of obtaining.

(a) Repentance. ii. 38.

(b) Obedience. v. 32.

(c) Prayer and unity. i. 14; ii.
1; iv. 31.

f. The Holy Catholic Church. ii. 39, 47;
xx. 28.

(1.) Meaning of the word church. The
Greek word *ἐκκλησία* in its primary and
civil sense means any assembly called to-
gether for any purpose; *e.g.*, xix. 32. In its
appropriated and religious sense it means
a society of Christians. The New Testa-

ment applies it to any society of Christians, large or small. Col. iv. 15; Acts xi. 22; vii. 38; Heb. ii. 12; I. Cor. xii. 28; Eph. v. 25; Acts ix. 31. (Revised Version.) Notice the different sizes of the society in these passages.

(11.) The principles governing the Apostolic Church.

The Church is a kingdom. John xviii. 36. Every kingdom has a king, subjects, and laws; also, officers subordinate to the king. Heb. xiii. 17.

(1) What officers were there in the Apostolic Church?

(a) Apostles. I. 2.

Choosing an Apostle. i. 13-26.

(b) Evangelists. xxi. 8; II. Tim. iv. 5.

(c) Elders and Bishops. xx. 17.

Choosing an Elder. xiv. 33. The Greek literally means, "and when they had elected Elders in every church by a show of hands."

The office of Bishop was identical with that of Elder or Presbyter.

(d) Deacons. vi. 1-6; Phil. i. 1.

(2) Now what principles were observed?

Let the student determine for himself from a study of the Acts alone what was the form of government of the early Church.

q. The communion of saints. ii. 44-47; iv. 34-35; vi. 1; xx. 35.

r. The forgiveness of sins. ii. 38; v. 31; xiii. 38; xxvi. 18; x. 43.

s. The resurrection of the body. iv. 2; xxiv. 15.

t. And the life everlasting. v. 20; xi. 18; xiii. 46, 48.

2. *About Prayer.*

i. 14, 24; ii. 47; iv. 24-30; vi. 6; vii. 59, 60; viii. 22-24; ix. 40; x. 2, 9; xii. 5, 12, 13; xiii. 3; xiv. 23; xv. 40; xvi. 13, 16, 25; xx. 36; xxi. 5; xxii. 17; xxviii. 8. Regarding each prayer, notice who prayed, for what, where, and when, the substance of the prayer and the spirit of it, with what result, in whose name, and in what circumstances of special interest.

3. *About Baptism.*

a. The two baptisms contrasted. xix. 2-6.

b. Who are to be baptized. ii. 38, 41; viii. 12; x. 47; xvi. 15, 33; xviii. 8; xxii. 16.

c. Manner. i. 5; viii. 38; x. 48.

4. *About the "Word."*

a. The doctrine concerning the attainment through Christ of salvation in the Kingdom of God. ii. 41; iv. 4, 29; vi. 4; viii. 4; x. 44; xi. 19; xiv. 25; xvi. 6; xvii. 11.

b. "The word of God," the substance of all their preaching. iv. 31; vi. 2, 7; x. 36 (see Westcott & Hort's Greek Testament); xi. 1; xii. 24; xiii. 5, 7, 44, 46; xvii. 13; xviii. 1; xix. 20.

c. "The word of the Lord." viii. 25; xiii. 48, 49; xv. 35, 36; xvi. 32.

d. The "word" in other connections. xiii. 26; xiv. 3; xv. 7; xix. 10; xx. 32, 35.

5. *Old Testament prophecies which were fulfilled.*

i. 16, 20; ii. 17-21, 25-28, 30, 31, 34, 35, 39; iii. 22, 25, 26; iv. 11, 25, 26; viii. 32, 33; xiii. 33, 34, 36, 41, 47, 49; xv. 16; xxviii. 26, 27. Add any others, and compare the quotation with the original passage.

6. *Heathen religious beliefs.*

xiv. 11-18; xvii. 18, 23; xix. 24-29; xxviii. 4-6, 11.

7. The student can find many interesting themes for special study in the Book. The two following will serve as illustrations merely.

a. The communism of the early church. ii. 44, 45; iv. 32-35.

(I.) Cause.

(1) Did the hope of His coming have any influence? i. 11.

(2) In answer to Christ's prayer. John xvii. 21; Psa. cxxxiii. 1.

(II.) Limitation.

There was a common fund, just as there had been with Christ. Luke viii. 3; John xii. 6; xiii. 29. There was no community of goods as touching the right or title to full possession of the same. Compare Peter's words to Ananias. v. 4. There was scope also for such alms-deeds as those of Dorcas. ix. 36. Mark's mother owned a house (xii. 12), and Mnason had private lodgings (xxi. 16). Compare also I. Cor. xvi. 2; I. John iii. 17; Rom. xv. 21. There was no denial therefore of the right of private property. This communism was only a unity of spirit manifesting itself in a unity of life.

(III.) Plato's Republic and More's Utopia place this among their regulations. Such love, Christ had foretold, would be a mark of His disciples. John xiii. 35. Such a social condition requires perfection of unselfishness in the social unit.

(IV.) This common life was not without its effect. iv. 33 finds its explanation in iv. 34. See the Greek. John xvii. 23.

b. Burials in the Acts.

(1.) Ananias. v. 1-10.

(1) By whom? The young men. Were they anticipations of the deacons, or were they just servants, chosen from the young because of their strength? Luke xxii. 26. It was not an office, because they are called by different names in the sixth and tenth verses. See Greek.

(2) How?

(*a*) Wound it up. There were no coffins in the east. The limbs were just wrapped in a body cloth. Luke xxiii. 63. John xx. 5-7.

(*b*) Carried it out, beyond the walls of the city.

(3) When? At once.

(*a*) Graves were always ready. Compare Joseph's tomb in which Christ was laid. They were merely caves with stones over the entrance. John xi. 43; Luke xxiv. 2, 3.

(*b*) It was a hot climate, and decomposition was speedy. Thus Lazarus was buried on the day of his death. John xi. 17, 39. Compare II. Kings ix. 34.

(*c*) Contact with a corpse was defiling. Sepulchres were white-

washed to warn people off. Num. xix. 11-16; Deut xxi. 23.

(11.) Stephen. viii. 2.

(1) By whom? Devout men,— Jews. Luke ii. 25; Acts ii. 5; xxii. 12.

(2) "Carried him." Word includes the whole rite, with all preparations for burial.

The Ashkenazic prayer books say, "These are the works of which a man reaps the interest in this world, and the capital endures in the world to come: the honoring of the father and mother, the doing of acts of mercy, the bearing forth the dead, the reconciliation of a man to his neighbor; but the study of the Torah is above them all." Gen. xxiii. 2; l. 9, 10; Mark xvi. 10.

XX. ANALYSIS OF THE ACTS.

1. *Introduction.*

Dedication. i. 1.

Post-Resurrection history of our Lord. i.
2-11.

Choice of Matthias. i. 12-26.

2. *Founding of the Church at Jerusalem.* ii.-vii.

a. Pentecost. ii. 1-40.

The descent of the Holy Ghost. ii. 1-13.

Peter's sermon. ii. 14-36.

The results. ii. 37-41.

Social relations of the converts. ii. 42-47.

b. The first miracle. iii.

The scene. iii. 1-11.

Peter's second sermon. iii. 12-26.

c. The first opposition. iv. 1-33.

The motive. iv. 1-4.

The council. iv. 5.

Peter's words. iv. 8-12.

The issue. iv. 13-33.

The threatening. iv. 13-22.

The prayers. iv. 23-32.

d. Social relations emerge again. iv. 34-v. 11.

The sincere. iv. 34-37.

The insincere. v. 1-11.

e. Progress. v. 12-42.

(1.) In belief. v. 12-16.

(11.) In opposition. v. 17-42.

First imprisonment. v. 17-18.

First deliverance. v. 19-25.

The second council. v. 26-42.

The reproof. v. 26-28.

Peter's fourth speech. v. 29-32.

Gamaliel. v. 33-39.

Discharged. v. 40-42.

f. Deacons chosen. vi.-vii. 60.

The choice. The men. Their work.
vi. 1-7.

Stephen. vi. 8 - vii. 60.

Invincible. vi. 8-10.

The trial. vi. 11-vii. 1.

The speech. vii. 2-53.

His death. vii. 54-60.

g. The Church spreading as a result. viii. 1-4.

3. *The Church witnessing in Judæa and Samaria.*
viii. 5-9.

a. Philip preaching. viii. 5-40.

Pentecost in Samaria. viii. 5-17.

Simon. viii. 18-25.

The Eunuch. viii. 26-40.

b. Saul persecuting. ix. 1-32.

To Damascus. ix. 1-2.

Persecutor converted. ix. 3-18.

And turns propagator. ix. 19-31.

c. Peter healing. ix. 32-43.

Ananias. ix. 32-35.

Dorcas. ix. 36-43.

4. *The Church going forth to the uttermost parts of the earth.* x-xxviii.
- a. The calling of the Gentiles. x.-xi. 18.
 A double conversion.
 Cornelius. x. 1-6, 21-44.
 Peter. x. 7-44.
 The Gentile Pentecost. x. 44-48.
 Peter's defence of his course. xi. 1-18.
- b. The choice of the Gentile centre. xi. 19-30.
 The Antioch revival. xi. 19-21.
 Through Barnabas. xi. 22-30.
 Sent. xi. 22-24.
 Chooses the great missionary. xi. 25.
 Selects Antioch. xi. 26.
 Visits Jerusalem with Paul. xi. 27-30.
- c. Afflictions and deliverances. xii.
 Death of James. xii. 1-2.
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 3-19.
 Fate of the oppressor. xii. 20-23.
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- d. The foreign field occupied. xiii.-xxviii.
- (i.) The first journey. xiii.-xiv.
 The missionaries chosen. xii. 25-
 xiii. 3.
 The route. xiii. 4-xiv. 26.
 Home and rest. xiv. 27, 28.
- (ii.) The great missionary problem.
 xv. 1-31.

- Origin of the dissension. xv. 1.
 The settlement. xv. 2-31.
 Visit to Jerusalem. xv. 2, 3.
 Statement of trouble. xv. 4, 5.
 The council. xv. 6.
 Peter. xv. 7-11.
 Barnabas and Paul. xv. 12.
 James. xv. 13-21.
 The decision. xv. 22-29.
 Satisfaction. xv. 30, 31.
- (III.) The second journey. xv. 34-
 xviii. 22.
 The inception and trouble. xv.
 34-39.
 The missionaries. xv. 39, 40.
 The route. xv. 41-xviii. 22.
- (IV.) The third journey. xviii. 23-xxi.
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 Antioch to Ephesus. xviii. 23-xix. 1.
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- (V.) Last stay at Jerusalem. xxi. 18-
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 21.

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23.
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- (VI.) Sent to Cæsarea. xxiii. 23 - xxvi.
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- (VII.) To Rome. xxvii. - xxviii.
The voyage. xxvii. - xxviii. 10.
The city. xxviii. 17-31.

XXI. SOME OTHER PHASES OF THE BOOK.

1. *A Book of beginnings.*

- a.* First Apostolic conference. i. 15.
- b.* First church prayer meeting. i. 14; ii. 1; xii. 12.
- c.* First religious suicide of the new dispensation. i. 19.
- d.* First Apostolic sermon. ii.
- e.* First Apostolic miracle. iii. 1-11.
- f.* First ecclesiastical organization. vi.
- g.* First imprisonment. v. 18.
- h.* First martyr. vii.
- i.* First persecution. viii. 1-4; xi. 19.
- j.* First Gentile convert. viii. - x.
- k.* First missionaries. viii. - xiii.
- l.* First heresy. viii. 18-24.
- m.* First European church. xvi. 12.

The Acts is a Book of startings, of inceptiveness, of setting things going.

2. *A missionary Book.*

The student will already have noticed many missionary problems upon which light has been thrown. Let him note the following methods of work :

- a.* Personal effort. viii. 26-40; x.; xiii. 7; xviii. 24-28; xxviii. 16.

b. Co-operation.

(I.) Between churches. viii. 5-17; xi. 19-22; xv. 1-31, 32.

(II.) Between individuals. Notice how frequently the work was done by "twos." Compare Luke x. 1; Acts iii. 1; viii. 14; ix. 38; x. 7; xi. 12; xi. 25, 30; xii. 6, 25; xiii. 1, 2; xv. 32, 40; xvi. 1-4; xvii. 15; xix. 22; xx. 4; xxiii. 23; xxvii. 2.

c. Reaching men by the living voice.

There is only one Christian letter in the book. Emphasized the "word," the spoken word. The disciples preached Christ. Notice the use of the human voice. viii. 26-40; xiii. 6-11; xx. 17-38; xxii.

Their preaching was not the delivery of sermons, but living teaching. v. 42; xv. 35; xvii. 1-3, 17; xviii. 1-11; xix. 1-10; xxviii. 30, 31. Compare also Acts xiii. 1; I. Cor. xii. 28, 29; Eph. iv. 11; Rom. xii. 7; Col. i. 28; iii. 16.

d. The use of the Scriptures.

Evidenced by the use of prophecy. They found among the Jews an open avenue for appeal here. xiii. 27; xv. 21.

e. Conformed to the customs of the people among whom they worked. xvi. 3.

Yet this did not prevent them from being perfectly faithful in their preaching. xvi. 21. This was a false charge,

made because the hope of gain was gone, but it shows how unflinching these disciples were in their proclamation of the new truths.

This desire not to rouse antagonism which would prevent the Gospel from having a fair hearing, is seen in the adaptation of the Gospel to the peculiar prejudices and modes of thinking of the people addressed. xiii. 15-48; xiv. 15-17; xvii. 18-32; xxii. 1-21.

f. They trained native workers. xiii. 1; xiv. 23; xx. 17.

It is evident that the missionaries exercised careful oversight over the churches. xv. 36. What were the Epistles?

g. They aimed at great cities :

Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth, Rome. xix. 21.

3. *Some significant lessons from the Book.*

a. Judicious and honorable compromise in religion.

(I.) ii. 46; iii. 1.

(II.) xi. 18; xxi. 20.

(III.) xvi. 3.

b. Generosity and charity.

(I.) The instinct and habit of giving to the poor and oppressed. ii. 45; iv. 37; x. 29, 30; xxiv. 17.

(II.) The unselfish spirit of the new Christians. xix. 19; xx. 35. Notice it displayed in the history of Barnabas and Paul.

(III.) Even the heathen are represented as gracious and kind. x. 2; xxiv. 23; xxiii. 20-22; xxvii. 3, 43; xxviii. 2, 7, 10.

(IV.) The inner life of the Church began to realize at least a little the idea which Christ had for it. "They love each other without knowing each other," said a pagan in amazement. The heathen proverb had been, "man is a wolf to a man he does not know." Christ's message was, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," and his definition of neighbor was not narrow.

Tertullian declared, in vindication of the Church: "Our compassion gives more in the streets than your religion in the temple." And when, after the martyrdom of Bishop Sixtus, his deacon was required to point out and surrender the treasures of the Church, he called all its poor together and showed them to the prefect of the city with these words: "These are the treasures of the Church."

c. The necessity and glory of single eyed unceasing devotion. iv. 13, 19-20; v. 29, 41-42; ix. 29; xx. 22-25; xxi. 13; xxvii. 23. These early Christians had their eyes upon Christ.

“ We would see Jesus — for the shadows lengthen
 Across this little landscape of our life ;
 We would see Jesus, our weak faith to strengthen
 For the last weariness, the final strife.

We would see Jesus, the great rock foundation
 Whereon our feet are set by sovereign grace ;
 Nor life, nor death, with all their agitation,
 Can thence remove us, if we see his face.”

d. Unity of doctrine in essentials. xiii. 38,
 39; xv. 9-11.

4. The Book of Acts shows us the Gospel just taking hold of the world, the new ideas just beginning to sway and to mould the thoughts and the lives of men. The fullness of time had come. Men were ready for a revelation. Plato's words had indicated a dim longing for it: “ We must lay hold of the best human opinion in order that, borne by it as on a raft, we may sail over the dangerous sea of life, unless we can find a stronger boat or some word of God which will more surely and safely carry us.” The ideas which the new message contained were new to the world, but they came from and were filled with divine power. Read Uhlhorn's *Conflict of Christianity with Heathenism*.

a. The Gospel taught a *complete regeneration of life*, even of the lowest and meanest life, by the grace of God, through the life blood of His Son. Contrast with this, as certain aspects of it are presented in Phil. ii. 1-11, such words as Seneca's: “ Give your whole mind to philosophy, be absorbed in it, cultivate it, and you will far

surpass all other men and be little inferior to the gods." "Admire only thyself." Or those of Celsus: "Let us hear what kind of persons these Christians invite. Everyone they say who is a sinner, who is devoid of understanding, who is a child, him will the kingdom of God receive. They assert that God will receive the sinner if he humble himself on account of his wickedness, but that He will not receive a righteous man, although he look up to him with virtue from the beginning. It is manifest to everybody that no one by punishment, much less by showing mercy, could wholly change those who are sinners both by nature and custom."

b. The Gospel taught the *unity of mankind* and the organization of the entire race in nations. xvii. 22-32. Any true conception of humanity is the product of Christianity, and this strictly Christian conception has been the condition of all large progress.

c. The Gospel taught the *dignity of labor*. Paul, Aquila, and Priscilla wrought at their trade with their own hands. The spokesman of the Apostles and the disciple of tenderest love had both been fishermen. Contrast with this the heathen notion. Plato deemed it right to despise men whose employment did not permit them to devote themselves to their friends and to the state. According to Aristotle, all forms of labor which required physical strength were degrading to a freeman. Cicero says: "A

mechanic's occupation is degrading. A workshop is incompatible with anything noble." Yet our Lord Himself was a carpenter's son. The Book of Acts breathes the hearty spirit of honest toil.

d. Plato represents a state as wholly disorganized where slaves are disobedient to their masters and wives are on an equality with their husbands. Aristotle characterizes women as beings of a lower kind. Socrates asks one of his friends, "Is there a human being with whom you talk less than with your wife?" The Gospel brought no such message. It had a word of joyful *emancipation for woman*. It made her free from servitude, that she might the more freely serve. So Libanius exclaimed, "What women there are among these Christians!" Read the Book of Acts through and observe in it the place assigned to women.

e. The Gospel made no terms with impurity. It demanded unqualified *uprightness of life*. The heathen world scarcely knew such a thing. Seneca wrote: "All things are full of iniquity and vice. More crimes are committed than can be remedied by force. A monstrous contest of wickedness is carried on. Daily the lust of sin increases; daily the sense of shame diminishes. Casting away regard for what is good and honorable, pleasure runs riot without restraint. Vice no longer hides itself. It stalks before all eyes. So public has iniquity become, so mighty does it flame up in all hearts, that

innocence is no longer rare, it has ceased to exist."

Lucian wrote later: "If any one loves wealth and is dazed by gold; if any one measures happiness by purple and power; if any one, brought up among flatterers and slaves, has never had a conception of liberty, frankness, and truth; if any one has wholly surrendered himself to pleasures, full tables, carousals, lewdness, sorcery, falsehood, and deceit,—let him go to Rome." And Livy wrote, more soberly: "Rome has become great by her virtues till now, when we can bear neither her vices nor their remedies." Compare with this Matt. v. 48, I. John iii. 3, Titus ii. 12, and the spirit of absolute innocence and childlike purity which marks the Christian life in the Acts.

f. When Stephen died, he "fell asleep." Paul had no fear as he looked forward to the end. He was ready, not only to be bound, but also to die for his Lord Jesus. It meant only a meeting with Him whom his soul loved. The Gospel was a message of *hope for dying men*. Heathenism was hopeless. Witness the inscriptions on its sepulchres: "To eternal sleep." "To eternal rest." "I was not, and became. I was, and am no more. This much is true, whoever says otherwise does not speak the truth, for I shall not be." "So long as I lived, I gladly drank. Drink ye who live," on the tomb of a veteran of the fifth legion. "Eat, drink, make merry, come." And Pliny

declared: "What folly is it to renew life after death! Where shall created beings find rest, if you suppose that shades in hell and souls in heaven continue to have any feeling. You rob us of man's greatest good—death. Let us rather find in the tranquillity which precedes our existence, the pledge of the repose which is to follow it." The Book of Acts speaks with a glad confidence of the world to come.

g. But the Gospel was a message, not alone of hope in death, but of *joy in life*. The Greek word *χάρις* occurs in Acts seventeen times, and the verb *χαρίζομαι* three times. See ii. 26, 46; v. 41; vii. 41; viii. 8, 39; xi. 23; xii. 14; xiii. 48; xv. 3; xvi. 34; xiv. 17; xiii. 52; xv. 31; xx. 24. The life of the early converts was one of endless, joyous song. It was not so with heathenism. Sophocles wrote in *Œdipus at Colonus*—

"Happiest beyond compare
Never to taste of life:
Happiest in order next,
Being born, with quickest speed
Thither again to return
From whence we came."

Seneca wrote: "The aim of all philosophy is to despise life. Seest thou yon height? Thence is the descent to freedom. Seest thou yon sea, yon river, yon well? Freedom sits there in the depth. Seest thou yon low withered tree? There freedom hangs. Seest thou thy neck, thy throat, thy heart? They are ways of escape from bondage."

Heathenism's only word was, "Patet exitus," — the way out of life lies open.

h. Heathenism was often agnostic. The Christianity of the Acts was nothing if it was not certain. It came with a clear claim of assured truth. This was what angered Cæcilius. He declares that one can know nothing with certainty. "Human mediocrity is so inadequate to the exploration of things divine, that it is not granted us to know, nor is it permitted to search, nor is it just to force, the things which are upheld suspended in the heavens above us, nor those which are sunk deep in subterranean abysses." Compare I. Tim. i. 12; Phil. i. 6; Acts ii. 36.

i. Get a firm grasp on the beliefs of the men of those days, about man, about life, about the world, and about God. Feel the influence of them on your individual spirit. Perceive them as moulding, world-swaying forces. Count not your life dear to yourself, so that you may finish your course with joy, and the ministry you have received of the Lord Jesus to testify the Gospel of the grace of God. And do not narrowly think that the kingdom of God is national, or sectional, or racial; but believe that it is what Christ said it was and the early Church believed it to be. Men who have learned the lessons of those early days are needed in these days. Let the student be numbered among them, and take to himself whatever is true in John Milton's words:

“Every true and free-born spirit feels that he is a born leader, and does not need either the gilt spear or the laying of the sword upon his shoulder to send him forth as a knight to rescue all that is innocent and oppressed.”



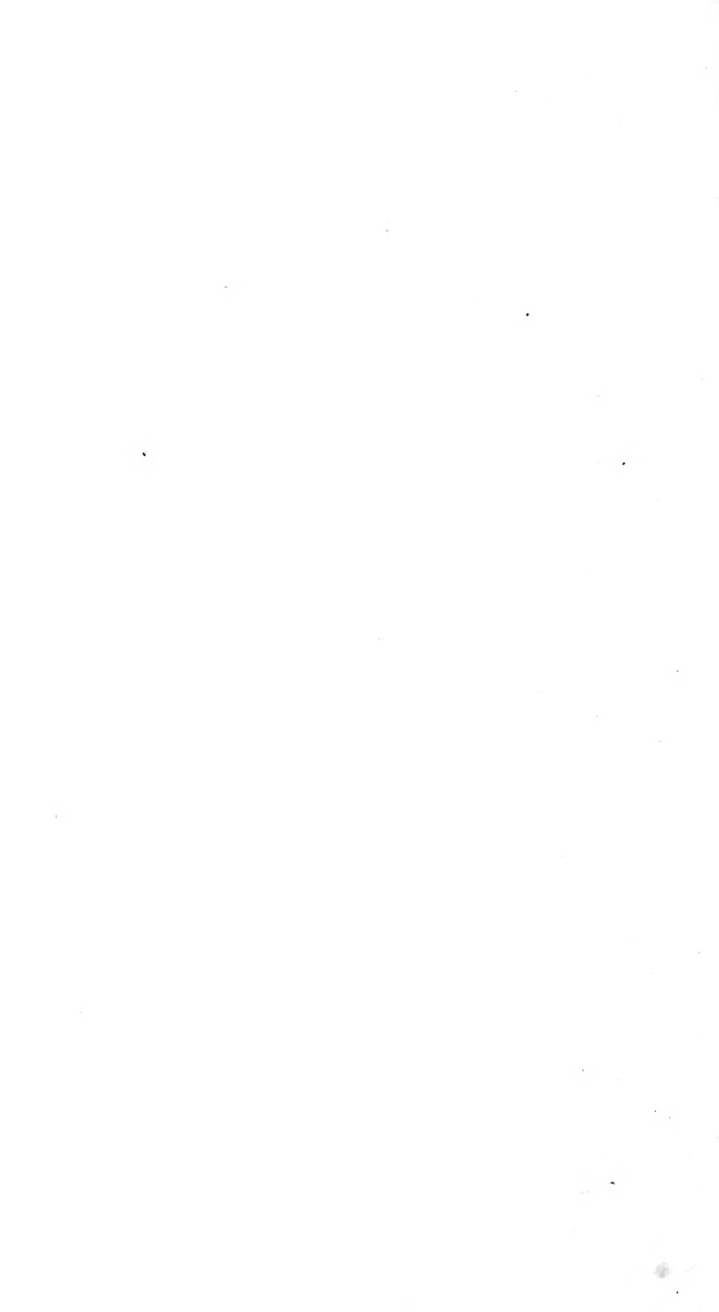
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